



# ST. MARIES

## Community Review Report

September 26-28, 2006  
St. Maries, Idaho

*Preserving the Past, Embracing the Future*



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- St. Joe Bed & Breakfast
- St. Joe Potty Huts
- St. Maries Art Council
- St. Maries Chamber of Commerce
- St. Maries School District
- TimberPlus
- Wells Fargo Bank

### *Special Thanks To*

#### St. Maries Home Team

- Kim Schwanz
- Shirley Ackerman
- Jeff Baker
- Carol Humphrey
- Janice McCall
- Michelle Ott
- Valdesue Stelle

#### Gift Contributors

- Archie's IGA
- Charlie's Saw Shop
- Doug Spencer
- Gene Peet, Peet Shoe Dryer, Inc.
- Main Street Antiques and Espresso
- Paul Bunyan Committee
- Schumacher Jewelry
- St. Maries, Idaho



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## Preface

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*If we get enough people involved, we can move forward together in creating a St. Maries we can all be proud of.*

Quoted by Mayor Robert Allen  
Mayor of St. Maries, Idaho  
November 2, 2006

Two rivers run through it. Three byways converge there. At every entrance point, change, opportunity and challenge have arrived on the doorstep of St. Maries—an entrance that has forever altered the face of one of the last vestiges of rural Idaho. Embedded in the change is enormous opportunity to rejuvenate St. Maries' vision for the future, without compromising her rural charm and historical roots. That is the common ground St. Maries must establish prior to taking the next step forward.

This report represents an inside look at St. Maries from an outside perspective. It is a snapshot at a point in time, not a thorough assessment that details each issue and challenge. However, it is an excellent starting point for creating an ongoing community dialogue of what is important to St. Maries' residents. We strongly encourage you to use this document as a springboard for community participation in developing a joint comprehensive plan that includes both city and county leaders.

Careful attention was given by each visiting team member in evaluating and interpreting different aspects of your community—all within the context of the uniqueness of St. Maries and each visiting team member's professional background and experience. The teams also understand the multifaceted nature of community and economic development and have provided insights that are verifiable and tested. The resource information at the end of each recommendation will greatly assist you in securing resources and technical assistance.

Visiting team observations include many areas where improvement is needed. Each observation and recommendation is offered within the context of knowledge-based community development strategies. You may find that some of the team's recommendations are less viable given other factors of which they were previously unaware. On the other hand, "other factors" can turn into excuses when what is needed is a fresh approach. That is what the visiting team offers. We hope this report reveals things about St. Maries that renews open and candid conversations on a variety of topics that affect the city, county, and the state of Idaho.

Participating in a Community Review process is a positive sign that St. Maries is aware of the significant growth challenges it faces and its willingness to address change proactively. The Community Review is a benchmark for moving forward with new initiatives and strategies that compliment current efforts and future plans. Several visiting team members are willing to return to St. Maries and assist you with your planning and implementation efforts. The Community Review Committee and the St. Maries Visiting Team members wish you all the best as you continue your successful work and celebrate your many accomplishments.

### ***Preserving the Past, Embracing the Future***

*Historical preservation must be more than salvaging the remnants of St. Maries' heritage. It must intentionally include, with pride and honor, the character and strength of past generations. Communities that embrace the future, while preserving the past, move forward with their character intact.*



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## Acknowledgments

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On behalf of the Community Review Coordinating Team, we wish to thank Mayor Robert Allen for extending a gracious welcome to the St. Maries Visiting Team. Thank you to the St. Maries City Council members, John Adams, Warren Chadbourne, Donny Masterson, Edward Spooner, and Jerry Wicks who served as valuable resources. We also thank the Benewah County Commissioners, Jack Buell, Terry Doupe, and Bud McCall for meeting with the review team.

### HOME TEAM MEMBERS

The St. Maries Community Review could not have been completed without the unwavering commitment demonstrated by the St. Maries Home Team. These team members coordinated the visiting team's trip to St. Maries, served as tour guides, shuttled team members, cooked and served meals, endured long days, answered endless questions, and, most of all, served as valuable resources. Home Team members included:

#### Coordinating Team

Kim Schwanz, Team Leader  
Shirley Ackerman

#### Infrastructure Team

Jeff Baker, Team Leader  
Valdasue Steele

#### Economic Development Team

Kim Schwanz, Team Leader  
Shirley Ackerman

#### Land Use Planning Team

Carol Humphrey, Team Leader  
Janice McCall  
Michele Ott

Special recognition is given to all who participated in hosting the visiting team, preparing and serving meals, and hosting meetings.

#### DAY ONE:

Cruise - Idaho Commerce and Labor staff / Potlatch Corp. (Cruise boat provided by Heyburn State Park, Ron Hise, narrator)

Pizza Dinner - TimberPlus / table decorations by Art Council

#### DAY TWO:

Breakfast - St. Joe Bed and Breakfast (Val & Cary Day)

Coffee and Donut break - St Marie Art Council

Lunch at the Golf Course - Rotary Club

Dinner at Senior Citizen Center - Idaho Rigging, St Joe Potty Huts, Wells Fargo, Rep. Dick Harwood

Cookies, Coffee & Punch for Public Forum Meetings - St Maries Art Council

#### DAY THREE:

Breakfast - St Maries School Dist./Heyburn Elementary

Lunch at the Grub Box – Kiwanis Club & Chamber of Commerce

Dinner at Avista Building - City of St Maries

Cookies, Coffee & Punch for Public Forum Meetings - St Maries Art Council

#### DAY FOUR:

Continental Breakfast - Idaho Commerce and Labor staff (St Maries Office)



### Gifts for Visiting Team:

*Ornaments* - Schumacher Jewelry  
*St Joe Memories Book* - Carol Humphrey  
*St Maries Sweatshirts / Hats* - Paul Bunyan Committee/Charlie's Saw Shop  
*Boxes of Fudge* - Idaho Commerce and Labor staff (provided by Main Street Antiques & Espresso)  
*Gift Certificates* - Idaho Commerce and Labor staff (espressos) and St. Joe Bed and Breakfast (overnight stay)  
*Bag of Elvis Misc.* - Doug Spencer (Elvis)  
*Bottle of Wine* - Archie's IGA  
*Peet Shoe Dryer* - Gene Peet (Peet Shoe Dryer, Inc)  
*St. Maries Wild Rice* - Jeff Baker  
*Tote Bag* - St Maries Art Council  
*Subscription to Gazette Record* - Gazette Record

Visiting team informational packets were collected and assembled by Annie Frederick and Susan Shoemaker (ID Commerce & Labor staff).

### **VISITING TEAM MEMBERS**

Visiting team members brought with them a variety of perspectives and areas of expertise. Included in the visiting team were representatives of city governments of other small, northern Idaho towns, private for-profit and non-profit organizations, and state and federal government. Visiting team members included:

#### **Coordinating Team**

Dale Dixon, Team Lead  
Vickie Winkel  
Erik Kingston  
John Martin  
Lora Ulrich

#### **Economic Development Team**

Hank Ebert, Team Lead  
Debbie Evans  
Beth Ineck  
Vince Rinaldi  
Margaret Hair

#### **Infrastructure Team**

Mac Cavasar, Team Lead  
Henry Artis  
John Austin  
Don Davis

#### **Land Use Planning Team**

Barbara Leachman  
Victoria Hahn  
Carla Olson  
Jon Norstog

#### **Lead Writer**

Deb Krum

#### **Floater**

Lorie Higgins  
Delta James  
Janet Weaver

While some members of both teams contributed to the review as part of their “regular” jobs, many others worked tirelessly as volunteers—in some cases even taking vacation time to participate. In all cases, individuals worked long hours, well beyond 8-hour workdays. This dedication is to be commended.



## Executive Summary

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This document provides an overview of a Community Review conducted for the City of St. Maries, Idaho, September 26-28, 2006. At the request of St. Maries, visiting team members spent three days observing, listening, analyzing, and recording information that eventually was submitted for inclusion in this report.

There are multiple purposes for which this report will prove helpful to St. Maries. First, it is laid out in such a way that community action teams can be organized around the three areas reviewed by the visiting team: Economic Development, Infrastructure, and Land Use Planning. Second, St. Maries' city and county government, civic leaders, and residents have an easy starting point for developing a joint comprehensive plan. Several members on the visiting team are available to assist you in this effort. Third, individual organizations such as the St. Maries Chamber of Commerce or Arts Council will gather practical insight and suggestions from several sections of this report. Fourth, the content and detailed information included in this final report make it an ideal reference document for grant writing efforts. Finally, the report also serves as a measurement tool for assessing the significant work already accomplished by the good citizens of St. Maries. We encourage you to utilize this report to its fullest extent.

Each of the teams wrote reports based on their assigned focus areas. Because of this, a certain amount of overlap and repetition appears among the reports. This allows each team's report to appear as that team intended, but is also an indication of the importance of an issue. In other instances, team reports may recommend different ways of resolving the same issue. It is up to the community to choose the path that makes most sense and brings about the most positive results. What follows is a brief summary of the observations and recommendations for each of the focus areas.

**Economic Development:** The main purpose of economic development is to help create jobs, expand businesses, improve incomes, and enhance the quality of life for residents of a given area. The group was asked to examine opportunities for economic diversification in St. Maries. The goals of economic diversification are to expand business opportunities and reduce the reliance on a single industry. This assignment, from diverse perspectives, is based on our experience and knowledge. The group considered various strategies for strengthening the local economy and creating new jobs by expanding the community's industrial base; expanding tourism and recreation opportunities; using arts, heritage, and culture as one of many tools to enhance small business development; creating job training programs; and forging regional alliances, among others.

### *Observations*

- St. Maries lacks a comprehensive plan that is inclusive and involves the whole community
- A well thought out tourism plan that highlights (brands) St. Maries logging history, heritage, and scenic beauty is needed
- Ongoing downtown development – a downtown can be a gathering place, the place to go whether it is to shop or socialize. St. Maries needs to create compelling reasons for residents and visitors to shop downtown
- Community presence on the Worldwide Web is a vital resource that is missing
- Signage and way-finding – branding and promotion is underutilized
- St. Maries' economy needs to be strengthened (a strategy needed)
- Maintain workforce training on a regular basis
- Cultural tourism opportunities need to be pursued in earnest

## Recommendations

- A community-wide, citizen-driven comprehensive plan needs to be in place before any new major projects are pursued.
- Utilize existing landmarks, local attractions, amenities and natural surroundings in creating a tourism plan – this also needs to include wide community representation.
- Utilize the collective resources to market and promote the downtown as a shopping sector, extending the retail hours as a way to expand business and to encourage the conventional local workforce to shop downtown, expanding downtown parking limit to 120 minutes to encourage exploring and browsing by visitors, encouraging employees to park at secondary sites to leave primary parking for customers, utilizing the “Main Street Program” as a template for long-term strategic planning
- Combine the two St Maries websites (Chamber and Gazette). It is important to give Internet searchers what they are looking for when they Goggle St. Maries. A distinct St. Maries website is vital to successful tourism.
- Create a visible St. Maries brand, such as the Loggers Memorial; perhaps that type of design can be continued or integrated throughout the community. Also, encourage businesses offering services (lodging, food, etc) to develop their own signs for their establishments.
- Facilitate entrepreneurial development in the region by providing networking opportunities for small business owners/entrepreneurs, establish a business-to-business mentoring program, schedule bi-monthly business education workshops/forums (e.g. accounting, marketing, financing, personnel management, licensing, legal), and sponsor a business boot camp that addresses key steps in starting a business and provides essential information. Facilitate a process for identifying and resolving needs.



**Infrastructure:** The infrastructure team took into consideration the community's size, economic base, as well as projections of future growth and present infrastructure needs in identifying three general priority areas. The observations made by the review team and the information gathered from the community indicated a need for upgrades to public/government facilities, to address community infrastructure with reference to future growth, and continue transportation upgrades. Consideration was given to the present condition of facilities, growth projections, economic/social impacts of facilities, highest/best use, and public input as

to need. In addition, the review scope included not only the City of St. Maries, but all of Benewah County as well. The interaction between City, County and State government and areas of jurisdiction were also considered in the team's observation.

## Observations

- Need for public/government facilities upgrades
- Assess future needs for growth
- Need for transportation upgrades

### *Recommendations*

- Consider the development of partnerships between the County, City, any impacted local nonprofits and the Coeur d'Alene Tribe to pool resources and funding sources; develop multi-purpose or multi-use facilities, i.e. Joint County and City administrative facilities; joint facilities for ambulance, fire, and public safety; incorporating a jail utilized by State, City and County, as well as the Tribe; and joint participation in a community health facility including a clinic, family planning, public health or similar types of community services. A feasibility study as to need, size, and location is recommended in any of the all areas of consideration.
- Review water and sewer systems capacities; study rates and implement metering program to reduce the demand on the water system and increase the life of both the water and the sewer system; and pursue increase of internet capacity.
- Extend downtown Main Street improvements to the east and west; upgrade streets south of College Avenue with curbs, gutters, and sidewalks; explore the construction of a truck route in the railroad right-of-way into, through, and out of town to get logging trucks off Main Street.

**Land Use Planning:** The Land Use Planning Team focused not only on the general issues of zoning, regulation and the provision of sites and services to meet community needs, but also on some of the larger issues facing the St. Maries community. Planning at its best is an expression of the values, life, hopes, dreams and aspirations of the community that carries it out. Communities that plan successfully are usually those that make it a community-wide effort and that take the time to reach consensus.

### *Observations*

- Change is coming – community-based planning is needed
- Take charge of change now
- Begin and sustain work on immediate crisis areas
- Plan for the long-term

### *Recommendations*

- Community-based planning is essential. By going through a community planning process, the community can articulate its goals, strategies and directions, and can tie them in with city regulations and the permitting process.
- Revise the zoning code to meet community needs; the City and the County could save on the costs of planning and development services by sharing staff between the two jurisdictions. The Coeur d'Alene Tribe may be willing to provide technical support or to participate in a three-party arrangement.
- Begin working on housing right now; consolidate a few large commercial sites within a well-defined commercial zone; and begin work on riverfront development to strengthen the local economy and bring in compatible tourism development.

## Part I. Introduction and Overview

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The Community Review is a partnership between local host communities and visiting teams made of individuals from the public (local, state, and federal), private, and non-profit sectors. Visiting teams use their expertise to assess identified issues within a community and provide feedback to that community for it to use to increase its own vitality and wealth.

The visiting team for the St. Maries review was composed primarily of individuals from northern Idaho (Coeur d'Alene, Hayden, Lewiston, and Wallace), so they were able to provide "outside" perspectives while still being intimately familiar with the region and its resources and challenges. They brought ideas and perspective from their own communities to share with St. Maries. The visiting team worked closely with a home team, who provided a wealth of local information and served as the visiting team's hosts. While the visiting team offers its observations and recommendations, it is up to the home team and all residents of greater St. Maries to work toward fulfilling the goals the community has set for itself.

### Community Review Process

The first Idaho Community Review took place in Heyburn, Idaho, in 2000. Since then, 11 additional communities have undergone review; St. Maries is the 13<sup>th</sup>. A Community Review is initiated by the community seeking review through completing a Community Review application (Appendix A) available online at <http://irp.idaho.gov/CommunityReview/tabid/221/Default.aspx>. Community Reviews are available to communities with populations of 10,000 and less.



When an application is received, the application is reviewed and a core Community Review team visits the community to meet with officials and gather additional information. If the application is accepted, several months of planning lead up to the actual review visit. During the advance planning stage, review leaders visit the community to help identify and articulate local needs, clarify roles and expectations, and develop a sense of the expertise needed in visiting team members to best serve the community.

The actual review visit takes place over a period of two to three days. (In St. Maries, the review took place September 26-28, 2006) During this period, a visiting team of approximately 20 - 25 individuals converge on the community to immerse themselves in specific focus areas (usually three) as identified by the community. The visiting team is divided into core groups (one for each focus area), each escorted by a home team, made of individuals with local expertise in the area of that group's focus. In St. Maries, the three areas of focus identified by the community, were:

- Economic Development
- Infrastructure
- Land Use Planning

The result of this collaboration is a mirror, or "sounding board," for the host community. Visiting team members listen, observe, question, and interact with community residents and leaders, then



develop observations, recommendations, and a list of resources available to the community, based on the three areas of focus. These results are communicated to the community in a variety of ways:

- An oral presentation, with plenty of time for community questions, comments, and interaction, presented the last evening of the review and open to all members of the community.
- A written report (this document) containing the same general information as the presentation, but in greater detail, to be used as a tool to help remind the community of its many assets and to provide recommendations and resources to better utilize those assets and manage local challenges.
- A formal presentation of the final written report to the community. Within three to four months following of the review, members of the visiting team return to the community with 200-300 copies of the printed report and present the document to the community. The report presentation often takes place during a regularly scheduled city council meeting. Community Review co-chairs give a short oral presentation, where they summarize the report and highlight action items for the community.

## In-Kind Value

The in-kind value of each review varies and is always substantial. It is the equivalent of hiring a professional consulting firm of 15 - 25 experts in land-use planning, economic/community development, tourism, facilitation, infrastructure, communication, and other fields of expertise for two to three days of focused on-site work (14 hour days are typical), plus weeks and months of work before and after the review by a core group of team leaders who plan the review, prepare the report, and follow up with the community. In addition, those experts open themselves to continual follow-up: a community can call any visiting team member at any time to seek advice or clarification. Travel and lodging costs are also assumed by the visiting team, as is the cost of preparing and printing the final report.

At standard billing rates for visiting team members, plus travel costs for 20 - 25 individuals, the total in-kind value to a community generally exceeds \$50,000 - \$75,000. The net cost to the community generally encompasses providing meals for visiting (and often home) team members for two days, local tour transportation, and meeting space, plus the time (paid and volunteer) of home team members. Many of the local out-of-pocket expenses are donated by community volunteers, businesses and civic organizations.

## St. Maries Community Review Organization and Schedule

On September 26, 2006, community development professionals descended upon St. Maries to begin the on-the-ground phase of the St. Maries Community Review. However, the Community Review process actually began much earlier with St. Maries' decision to apply for a Community Review, and subsequent submission of its application, in February 2006. In its application, the City of St. Maries asked the review team to look at three core interest areas: Economic Development, Infrastructure, and Land Use Planning.

### Pre-Review Planning

Prior to the September community visit, a core group of organizing team members worked with the St. Maries Home Team on identifying sites of interest, logistics, and scheduling. Time was also spent defining and clarifying review goals and expectations.

### Community Review Survey

In preparation for the on-the-ground review, a five-page survey was made available to St. Maries' residents in August/September 2006 (Appendix B). The survey asked respondents to rate 75 community features and resources as well as share thoughts on strengths, assets, challenges, and

problems facing the City of St. Maries. Copies of the survey were available to residents at businesses throughout the community and were randomly distributed to households within the city. Five hundred and seventy-two surveys were evaluated. With an estimated population of 2,634 the survey return rate is about 22%. The surveys were processed and evaluated by University of Idaho under the direction of Priscilla Salant, UI Coordinator for Outreach and Engagement.

The following is a summary of the community features and most common themes collected from the comments section of the surveys. A more complete compilation is found in Appendix C.

**Table 1. Highest Rated Community Features**  
Agree & Strongly Agree combined percentages)

<b>Community Feature</b>
City provides adequate parks and playgrounds for families (66%)
City provides adequate garbage collection and disposal (75%)
Area's ambulance service meets the needs of the area (71%)
Emergency health care is available in the area (81%)
Access to hospital services is available in the area (83%)
Downtown area has an attractive appearance (78%)
Public buildings have an attractive appearance (65%)
Local stores provide a variety of goods (56%)
Local stores provide quality goods (59%)
Adequate number of banking and financial services in the area (78%)

**Table 2. Lowest Rated Community Features**  
Disagree and Strongly Disagree combined percentages

<b>Community Feature</b>
There is adequate number of doctors in the area (51%)
Adequate amount of rental housing is available (apartments and houses), (53%, 31% neutral)
Available rental housing is in good condition (43%, 43% neutral)
Adequate number of restaurants in the community (50%, 12% neutral)
Adequate number of hotel/motel accommodations in the area (68%)

**Table 3. Common Themes in Written Comments**

<b>Theme</b>
Location: weather / beauty / recreation
Good community, friendly people / good programs / churches
Small size town
Crime low/good law officers / emergency services
Quality schools / education

## **Review Week**

Visiting team members arrived in St. Maries the afternoon and evening of Tuesday, September 26, and most stayed through the evening of September 28, departing the morning of September 29. Visiting team leaders stayed through the morning of September 29 to begin work on this report, conduct follow-up activities, and take additional photos. A detailed itinerary can be found in Appendix D.



### Tuesday, September 26

Community Review participants and community leaders met for an “ice breaker” session Tuesday evening. Following home and visiting team introductions, the visiting team met to review the agenda, define and clarify goals and expectations. Afterwards the home and visiting team members gathered at Aqua Park for appetizers and a trip down the St. Joe River on the Heyburn State Park riverboat. The evening ended with dinner at the Federal building hosted by TimberPlus.

### Wednesday, September 27

Home and visiting team members met Wednesday morning for breakfast at St. Joe Bed and Breakfast. Cary & Val Day own and operate the year-round bed and breakfast that sits along the St. Joe River. After breakfast, the teams split into their different focus areas and visited various locations throughout St. Maries. The review floaters had numerous conversations with residents, business owners and organization leadership. Lunch was served at the nine-hole St. Maries Golf Course which was hosted by the Rotary Club. The community tours continued until the team members met for dinner at the Senior Center. Following dinner, the first of two public forum meetings were held at the Eagles Hall. Mayor Robert Allen and Dale Dixon provided opening comments before an evening of conversations with about 50 of St. Maries’ citizens. Visiting team members gathered in their respective focus areas, economic development, infrastructure, and land use planning, to hear public input.



### Thursday, September 28

Visiting team members spent the day discussing and distilling the information gathered on Wednesday. The entire visiting team discussed issues and themes that were common to all focus areas. Each focus group developed a brief outline of their observations and recommendations and prepared presentations that were given to the public, community leaders, and home team members at a town-hall type meeting Thursday

evening. Approximately 50 members of the St. Maries community attended Thursday’s meeting, which was advertised in conjunction with Wednesday night’s meeting (see above). A lively question and answer session followed the presentations; cookies and punch were served afterwards and community members had the opportunity to visit with visiting team members one-on-one.

Thursday's meals were hosted by the St. Maries School District at Heyburn Elementary School, Kiwanis and St. Maries Chamber of Commerce, and City Council members at the Avista Building. The public forum was held again at the Eagles Hall.

#### Friday, September 29

Visiting team joined the home team for breakfast at the St. Maries Commerce and Labor office. Dale Dixon led a short meeting where the visiting team reflected on the tour, discussed recommendations, and received information on writing the report. The home team surprised the visiting team with a variety of gifts that were donated by local businesses and artisans. By noon, all visiting team members were on their way home.

### Home Team Makeup and Contribution

The home team members represented a cross-section of the community: men and women, business owners, employees and retirees, local leaders, community volunteers. Although the home team was small in number, they provided several opportunities for the visiting team to meet with other community groups, including the two open forum meetings.

Many of the home team members donated their time and resources. The city and county, with assistance from home team members, provided meeting rooms, tour transportation, refreshments and meals for visiting team members, and refreshments for local residents at the public meeting. A list of businesses and organizations who provided monetary and in-kind contributions to the review process can be found on the inside front cover of this document.

### Visiting Team Members

Visiting team members represented a diverse mix of professionals from the public, private, and non-profit sectors. They included federal, state, and local government representatives; experts in housing, tourism, labor, and planning; and private consultants, to name a few. Many visiting team members donated their time, along with their travel and lodging costs.

This significant investment represents an in-kind match toward a community's planning efforts and should be an incentive for community leaders and residents to make the best possible use of the review process and product. This is the equivalent of hiring a 23-member consulting firm for the cost of meals and local tours only. The biographies and photos of the St. Maries Visiting Team members can be found in Appendix B.



### Community Description

The lush valley of the St. Joe River is the spectacular setting for the town of St. Maries. The mountains, rivers, lakes, and forests provide a scenic backdrop for the town. St. Maries offers visitors and residents all the services that are needed for an excellent quality of life. With its spectacular forest and river setting, St. Maries provides wonderful experiences, whether for a day or a lifetime.





The finest recreational opportunities are plentiful in this incredibly beautiful area of forests, rivers, and lakes. Some of the best boating and water recreation anywhere can be found in St. Maries on the St. Joe River, St. Maries River, Coeur d'Alene Lake, and other lakes and rivers surrounding the area. The St. Joe River is a free-flowing 120 miles offering adventures from white water rafting to peaceful float trips.

St. Maries, the county seat for Benewah County, is a thriving community that sits along the St. Joseph River. The city is located about 2.5 hours from the Canadian border and 3 hours from Missoula, Montana. According to the July 2005 census, the estimated population is about 2,634. The majority of the population is White non-Hispanic residents and 3.4 percent Native Americans. The county population is well over 9,000 and growing.

Almost 100 years ago, Joseph Fisher decided that the junction of the St. Maries and St. Joseph rivers would serve as an ideal location for the area's first sawmill. After the turn of the century, St. Maries became an incorporated city. By then, two larger mills had been built and the steamboats, which traveled the St. Joseph River and Coeur d'Alene Lake provided cheap, rapid transportation. The arrival of the transcontinental Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad in 1909, plus the opening of the Coeur d'Alene Indian Reservation to homesteading, provided stimuli for further growth in the first decade and a half. The Milwaukee Road pushed a branch line south and east to Elk River and numerous narrow gauge logging railroads crisscrossed the area.



With the increased demand for lumber during World War I, the sawmills prospered greatly. Even after the devastating loss of timber in the Fire of 1910, there were plenty of virgin stands to meet the demand. During the Great Depression, sawmills shut down and there was very little work in the woods. In the late 1930s, just before the Reconstruction Finance Administration was about to auction off the last large mill in the area, the people of St. Maries rallied to help provide the capital to save the mill and get it opened again as the St. Maries Lumber Company—just in time to meet the rising demand of the re-armament time of the late 1930s.

World War II years hosted the greatest demand and production for lumber, continuing into the late 1950's. The three recessions of the 1950s put the local economy on a roller-coaster until 1961 when the St. Maries Lumber Company, the largest employer and biggest mill in the area, was destroyed by a fire.

The people of the area rallied again, forming the Benewah County Development Corporation, which took advantage of federal assistance to get a plywood mill built on the site of the lumber mill. The plywood mill expanded several times and came under the ownership of Potlatch Corporation, who currently operates it as part of its St. Maries Complex, which manufactures plywood, dimension lumber and woodchips.

In that same period, the development corporation helped finance the beginning of what is now the Rayonier complex in Plummer. In addition to Rayonier, Regulus Stud Mill was opened in St. Maries, thus providing a market and milling for tree sizes which were previously unsalable.

During all these years, the usual accompaniments of growth appeared—schools, churches, hospital, tradesmen, skilled and professional people. The beautiful country, recreational opportunities, wildlife and pace of living have attracted an extraordinary number of talented people to the area who prefer and choose to live here.

## Community Expectations

Each community who undergoes a Community Review identifies three main focus areas. St. Maries focus areas included economic development, infrastructure, land use planning, with a special emphasis on housing. The application included the following focus description:



- 1.) With respect to economic development we are looking for help in business recruitment, retention and expansion.
- 2.) Housing is a critical need here as more people look outside the Coeur d'Alene area for more reasonable housing options. We also need to increase our workforce for future growth.
- 3.) We are seeing a steady increase from early retirees coming into St. Maries for relocation and secondary homes. To meet their needs additional housing in the moderate to high-end home is required.
- 4.) St. Maries is located at the confluence of the St. Maries and the St. Joe Rivers. A portion of the available land for expansion is located on the flood plain. Critical care is needed to evaluate the local available property to be used for a maximum benefit.

In its own words, the City of St. Maries requested the Community Review in hopes that:

Providing our local community leaders and community information to allow St. Maries and the surrounding area to grow cohesively with a common plan that is attainable.

## Previous and Current Planning Efforts, Grants, and Community Projects

The City of St. Maries, Benewah County, local businesses, and various other entities have been proactive in working together to secure grants and have begun efforts to plan for, and manage, anticipated growth.

**1999:** The City of St. Maries obtained a \$4.5 million dollar water system reconstruction project grant.

**2000:** The City launched a major revitalization effort. The project included a rewrite of the Vision Plan, the marshaling of support from the City, Benewah County, and Local Improvement District (LID) participants. Financial participation for the revitalization project included the Idaho Transportation Department, LID participants, Benewah County and the City of St. Maries.



**2001:** A major campaign to improve tourist related activities and services in the area was launched. This included efforts to secure additional retail outlets within the city and the county. Gem State Grill a full meal restaurant and Aiton's Family Furniture store were recruited. Funding was acquired for historical signage and mural projects in St. Maries. Plans were developed for the Parker Pass view area for the Idaho Department of Transportation. ITD conducted an evaluation of the State Highway Three truck length restrictions problem.

**2002:** Phase one of the city revitalization plan for the core area was completed. TimberPlus coordinated with ITD for funding to eliminate a portion of the State Highway Three discrepancies that contribute to the 53-foot trailer length restrictions. Preliminary planning for a resort hotel / convention center project was initiated. A developer to construct a local RV park was secured.

**2003:** An LID and design efforts for phase two of the City of St. Maries revitalization plan and phase two of the St. Maries Downtown Revitalization project was completed.

**2004:** With assistance from the Idaho State Scenic Byways Coordinator new signage and informational brochures for the White Pine Scenic Byway were completed. Fish and Game worked with area partners to complete bathroom facilities at the sportsmen access on State Highway Three at the future site of an informational kiosk on White Pine Scenic Byway.

A joint effort with St. Maries Chamber of Commerce to increase tourism activity in the St. Maries area through special events was pursued. Cowboy Action Shooting "Great Northern" was held in September. This annual event now has a permanent location five miles east of Plummer.

The Spring Creek Lodge Academy plans to develop a boarding school at Santa, Idaho.

**2005:**

- The Loggers Memorial site was secured from the Idaho Transportation Department
- TimberPlus applied for and was approved by the Idaho Transportation Departments Scenic Byway Committee for the designation of the new St. Joe Scenic Byway. Signs and brochures were completed in February 2006.
- The TimberPlus web site for business recruitment was completed.
- Harbor Lands Company was consulted about bringing in a new motel
- Three start-up business began operations in 2005: Stillwater Electric, Measurement Technology, and Jason Guidry Cabinets (Benewah County)
- Work continued with Plant Care Technologies of Moscow Idaho, to find funding for a startup business whose raw material is Red Fir tree bark.
- Other Projects:
  - School District #41 applied for a grant for heating systems for school buildings through the "Fuels for Schools" program
- TimberPlus worked with developers to secure annexation rights for housing developments in the City of Plummer.
- Waterford Homes and Tau Development developed new housing in Benewah County.
- John Ruggles of Friends of the Coeur d'Alene Trail worked to develop a route from the Trail of the Hiawatha located in Shoshone County to St. Maries.

**2006:**

- A \$5,000 grant was received from Scenic Byways Committee to develop and place for tourist information panels along the St. Joe River Scenic Byway, which runs from St. Maries to the Montana border in Shoshone County.
- The Idaho Rural Partnership conducted a Community Review, September 26-29 2006.
- Finished Community and Business Profile Brochure paid for by Avista Grant secured in the fall of 2005.

- Working with a cedar products company that is looking to build a cedar mill in Benewah County or in southeastern Shoshone County.
- Worked with the city of St. Maries to begin appraisal of section 34 so that it may be sold for development in the fall of 2006.
- Appraisal has been completed but not released
- Worked with Panhandle Area Council on RCDBG and RCBG grants to help in the repair of the railroad trestle owned by Potlatch Corporation, that is vital to two major Benewah County employers. In addition this rail line is used in marketing Benewah County to prospective manufacturing businesses.
- Working with the arts council and local businesses to develop a marketing strategy for 2007 and beyond
- Developing the Horizon Program for St. Maries (University of Idaho)
- Working with local businesses in Emida, Idaho to refurbish the 1930's School (used as a Community Center).
- Secured \$25,000 from Idaho Commerce and Labor to fund an economic development professional.

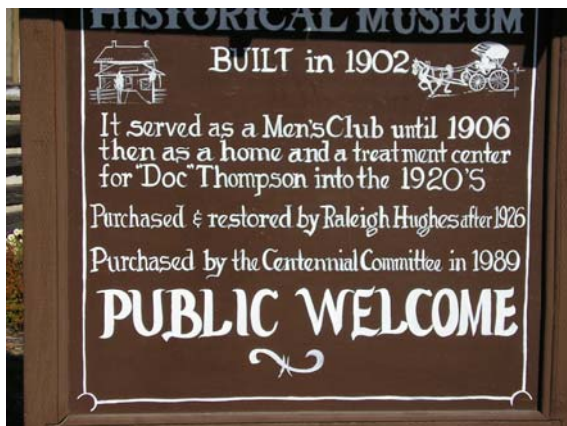
## Areas of Consensus and Contention

As with most communities, there are always diverse points of views on multiple issues. During St. Maries' Community Review there were a few issues that continually emerged while we met with city leaders, business owners, and various community members.

The first area of consensus relates to the Coeur d'Alene Tribe and the need for collaboration and partnership, rather than what is perceived as competition or threat. Several residents of St. Maries expressed concern that old wounds prevented new opportunities from being realized.

There are many examples where Idaho cities are partnering with the Tribes on a number of fronts. Bonners Ferry and Fort Hall are prime examples of working through tough issues to achieve mutual accomplishments for the greater good. Intentional relationship building is key to producing positive results.

A second area that was mentioned repeatedly by several residents, old and new, is the apparent bias toward "outsiders", particularly those from California and the East Coast. Some even described it as open hostility and resentment. This is a fairly common experience in rural communities where development has been allowed to escalate beyond what is manageable. To address this challenge, rural communities are becoming more proactive planners and are controlling the growth rather than the growth controlling them.



Established residents may feel threatened, not so much by outsiders, but when change and progress bypasses effective, participatory planning. When second and third generation citizens observe longstanding traditions and historical landmarks giving way to urban-type development, resentment can occur. This is an experience that many rural and frontier towns are dealing with throughout the United States. A number of these cities are using successful planning strategies, gaining local resident participation, and determining for themselves the boundaries of progress best suited for their community vision. In order for St. Maries to

manage its future and move beyond a negative perception of "outsiders," similar strategies must begin immediately.

Another area of consensus that was repeated in several informal conversations relates to St. Maries' young people. Concerns included generational poverty, substance and alcohol abuse, lack of work ethic, high divorce rate resulting in broken families, low expectations and lack of youth involved in community affairs. With the out-migration of youth from frontier and rural communities increasing at an alarming rate, these issues are of extreme importance to St. Maries.

It is also vitally important for current city and county leaders to prepare and actively replenish the leadership pool. The National League of Cities and the Association of Idaho Cities have resources available to communities interested in youth leadership development. Early engagement ensures committed participation.

## Challenges and Opportunities Expressed by the Community

Dr. Lorie Higgins, an assistant professor in the Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology Department at the University of Idaho, used the majority of her time interviewing residents and conducting an on-foot analysis of St. Maries. Her observations, along with recommendations, provide an inside perspective into the day and life of a person living in St. Maries.

### **Most Common Theme:** Education/ youth

Some: low expectations for youth here, educationally and behaviorally

Others: kids come first here and the schools are great. Some systemic issues: generational poverty, substance and alcohol abuse, lack of work ethic instilled, discipline. Lots of broken families in last 15 years. Schools only teach what kids need to know to stay here, but most will leave. Don't have anything here for them to look forward to and aspire to (high paying jobs). Uncertainty about the future of the timber industry. Youth not engaged in community affairs.

**Theme:** Growth is going to happen, be prepared, but ensure living wage jobs that will keep youth here. Many seniors are moving here. Don't want low-end tourist development, but more river-recreation related businesses (rent canoes, develop the waterfront).

**Theme:** Lots of folks who work in town live outside of town. City/County growth plans need to encourage investment inside town boundaries.

**Theme:** Limited primary economic base, but a diverse secondary and informal economy. Bartering, booths at the art gallery, e-bay trade.

**Issue (suggested that leadership should address):** The renovated streetscape is great according to some and it is part of what attracts people to the town, but others are resentful of the costs imposed on a few by the improvements (LID). Suggests that broader consensus for big projects is needed, to get buy-in and to ensure externalities are mitigated.

**Issue:** There are issues with the Tribe that need to be settled, but in the meantime there are opportunities to work together on other issues. One suggestion is to get on the Council meeting agenda from time to time to provide updates on St. Maries. Don't go just when you want something from them.

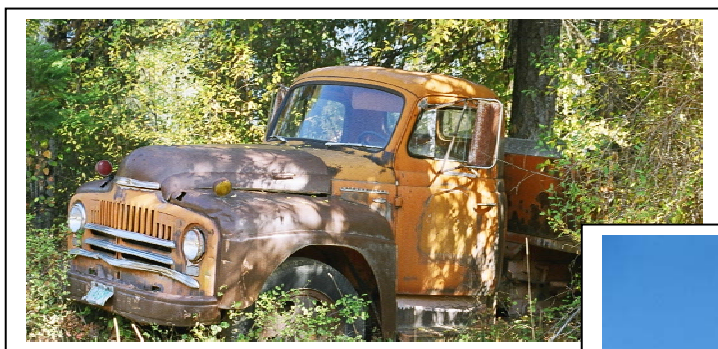
**Issue:** The leadership base is small and aging. While the current leaders are doing a good job, there is a need to broaden the base of leadership by providing some leadership development opportunities that reach across classes, generations and gender. More women, youth want to be involved, newcomers and low-income residents. Several believe the current leadership is doing a good job, but will be retiring and increasingly complex issues will require collaboration, partnerships and intensive community involvement. Service organizations are aging and membership is declining, so fostering leadership across the community can help them too.

## **INTERVIEWS**

**Real estate agent:** Most people who stop in as visitors and then return to buy property are retired or retiring. They say what attracted them is the landscape, nice downtown and friendly people and community.

One person said they live out of town and says where they live, “You can hear the leaves falling from the trees. Where else can you have that?”

**Grandmother, born and raised here:** Married her high school sweetheart, loves the warm, supportive community. “It’s almost like everybody is family.” Also loves the recreational opportunities. Her family camps almost every weekend.



*I love the small town feel of St. Maries.*



Would like to see a new (and different type of) restaurant, another ladies clothing store, another pharmacy, and there is a need to offer more up river (the St. Joe Lodge). The Lodge is closed, but could be a great resort-type place.

Vision is more jobs to keep kids here (but pessimistic about it happening—instead sees St. Maries becoming a bedroom community).

**Two women, one from Santa and a retired schoolteacher:** Mrs. Santa would like to live in St. Maries, but housing prices are too high.

“This is truly a community where if someone has a need, help is there. We seldom have a fundraiser that doesn’t go over \$20,000.

Feels she has been taken in by the community—embraced (not originally from Idaho). Has three kids in school and thinks it's great. Businesses in town are helpful: if you have a problem with your car, they'll stop what they are doing and help. Sees newcomers as being embraced.

Kids come first here. Some great programs: summer parks/reading program. It's a safe place for them.

Love the new downtown streets and the streetlights.

Don't want the community to change, but when it does would like to keep the home-like atmosphere. Want to stay in control of own destiny. Don't want people to come here and buy for the purpose of making an investment. "We want people who really want to live here."

Diversify the economy so there is something for kids to stay for—clean industry with good paying positions – something not timber-tied.

Grow gradually enough so traffic, sewage and water don't become an issue.

Leadership base: a few are making most decisions, but are doing a good job. If we grow we will need to broaden the base.

### **Beauty Shop Interviews**

Dance classes, more youth activities indoors, restaurants and shopping.

Keep non-sports programs at the schools.

Do something with Murphy's landing! Marina, restaurant, motel and public access. More river-related businesses.

Beauty and the river are a few of St. Maries' assets. Mixed feelings about tourism. Don't want to be overrun or dominated by low-end tourist businesses. Also want people to come and then go away. If they do stay, don't change the town into a big city.

Not prepared for growth that's coming "Our infrastructure is not there." Make laws now instead of waiting until they are here and trying to change things. "People come because it's peaceful and nice, but then they want to change it."

**Downtown business owner:** Downtown project. An LID that business owners are still paying for but "only three people wanted it." First big snow, they won't know what to do with it.

Business at the pawnshop is booming since the price of fuel and housing has increased "people are bringing in nice things."

Local government should stop chasing the grants.

**Downtown business owner:** Since 1990. Came for personal reasons, met spouse and stayed. Got involved in the community through a church.

Likes knowing a lot of people where she lives.

Business owner has different ideas than many others in the community, but thinks diversity is what makes the community strong.

Would like to see the bars cleaned up. The community needs awareness of the many who live in poverty and who have substance and alcohol abuse problems.

Could be more of a police presence on Main St.

Need a diverse economy – the woods can't be relied on forever.

Need zero tolerance for alcohol consumption among teens.

Need more river recreational-related businesses. You change or you die. That's how it works. Doesn't like the main street renovation. Cost business during installation and the sidewalks have gotten frost heaves. One year couldn't open the front door.

Need a decent skatepark. Kids go too fast on the sidewalk.

**Retiree from Potlatch:** Diversify economy, because kids can't stay here. The commissioners do a lot for the community. Lots of small businesses that you don't realize.

**Native store manager on Main Street:** Should do more to tie in with the bike trails. The kids grew up here—great place for them. Both are in timber industry. Need more vocational-technology in the high schools. Most kids are not college-bound—they are talented though but aren't given the push they need.

More living wage jobs needed. Need more affordable housing.

**Newcomer (four years):** Family ties through spouse. Likes that St. Maries is small but has services and can know the people. Nonprofit organizations in the community are helping people. Great stuff for kids through the library (friends of the library) and with the help of Kiwanis.

Meth and drugs are a problem.

Would like to see the boardwalk on the river restored.

**Teacher:** "Artists are part of the wealth of this community." Families are another strength that is being challenged by divorce and income decline. Kids are greatly affected: less respect. "Kids love the outdoors here. They don't even have to say it you see it in their art."

There is a tension here: A desire for development, but the community wants to stay the same. We need to define "development" as a community. The community gardens are a great asset.

It is a good ol' boy leadership base, but they do a good job.

**Retired government worker:** My father always taught me to give back to the community, so I've done that all my life. Doesn't want development policy that encourages growth outside the town. Need to improve the housing stock and infrastructure IN town first.

**Newcomer:** Loves the quilt club and feels welcomed by the community.

**Local business owner:** "Coeur d'Alene – we KNOW we don't want that to happen here." Most of it has become "any other town USA." Have to plan for change. Preserve a walking community. Also, a lot of homes just need a little fix up.

**Newcomer from California:** Felt welcomed by the businesses at first, then was ignored. Would like to see a welcome wagon type thing instituted in the community. Resents the "damn



Californian" label this person has been given. Feels that the community is not well-served by dismissing newcomers like that because they may be discouraging that person from offering something back to the community: "They don't know me. I might be bringing them a gold mine!"

**Local agency employee:** Community education building is run-down. It feels like it's for the "leftover" people. Some special education needs to happen here, school district offices and summer video activities for youth.

**Young store clerk:** Would like to start her own business, but is afraid there won't be enough traffic in St. Maries for her to succeed.



## Part II: Team Reports

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The following sections summarize the observations and recommendations of each of the three focus teams. The information and observations are based on team members' experiences during their three-day visit to St. Maries; input from citizens provided during town-hall meetings, in casual conversations, and through the written community survey; and additional information and observations gathered before and after the September community visit.

### Economic Development

The Economic Development Focus Group consisted of Hank Ebert and Beth Ineck, with the Idaho Department of Commerce and Labor's Economic Development Division; Debbie Evans, an independent businesswoman and Kamiah-based grant writer; Margaret Hair, of USDA Rural Development's North Idaho Office; Delta James, Community Development Director, Idaho Commission on the Arts; and Vince Rinaldi, Executive Director of the Silver Valley Economic Development Corporation. We were ably joined in our deliberations by John Martin, Northern Idaho Regional Director for U.S. Senator Larry Craig.

The main purpose of economic development is to help create jobs, expand businesses, improve incomes, and enhance the quality of life for residents of a given area. Our group was asked to examine opportunities for economic diversification in St. Maries. The goals of economic diversification are to expand business opportunities and reduce the reliance on a single industry. We approached this assignment from diverse perspectives based on our experience and knowledge. We considered various strategies for strengthening the local economy and creating new jobs by expanding the community's industrial base; expanding tourism and recreation opportunities; using arts, heritage, and culture as one of many tools to enhance small business development; creating job training programs; and forging regional alliances, among others.



#### General Observations – Build on Your Base

We observed that there are many opportunities for economic diversification in St. Maries and Benewah County area. The timber industry has obvious potential for expansion. Value-added products appear to be a viable option to broadening the primary industry base. Unlike many communities that have a historical Natural Resource primary industry base, St. Maries and Benewah County appear to have a much more stable raw product base than do other Idaho counties, such as Shoshone. Unlike Shoshone County, Benewah County has a lot of privately owned land. As a result the timber industry is less volatile than counties that are largely Federal land. A railroad

system adds to the area's vitality. Biomass availability and its ability to create lower energy costs, as well as its value-added potential, should be addressed. These conditions can also open discussions with environmental groups on forest maintenance.

As will be noted below in more detail, however, a heavy reliance on one dominant industry puts the entire community at risk if there is a significant downturn in that industry. That is one reason why we were asked to study opportunities for economic diversification and suggest strategies for helping existing businesses expand in St. Maries.

Lone Eagles are another primary industry group. Lone Eagles are independent business owners who can work anywhere, usually with the proviso that there is adequate telecommunications

infrastructure. Sometimes the recruitment of Lone Eagles as an economic diversification strategy is ignored and therefore unrealized. With the introduction of the Internet, Websites, and broadband connectivity capability, this primary industry group should be a target of any small community that provides a pleasant small town atmosphere, a good place to raise families, and a large variety of outdoor recreational opportunities. Generally, Lone Eagles require very little infrastructure (other than telecommunications) and external workforce, which may be a benefit in areas where there is low unemployment. Also, they can bring lots of money from outside of the area to be circulated locally. St Maries offers amenities that would be as attractive to Lone Eagles as they are to its residents.

How can one go about attracting Lone Eagles? One idea is to develop an Alumni Campaign. Approach people who were raised in your community, subsequently left, and never really returned. This is Poor Man marketing! An economic development organization, chamber of commerce, or local business groups can easily accomplish this type of marketing. Current class reunion data is useful in reaching former residents who may want to return with their families and businesses. *Classmates.com* is surprisingly good as a data source if no current list is available. Ask alumni for ideas, contacts, and/or money for your “Come Home to St. Maries” efforts.

### **General Community Comments and Concerns**

One of our early tasks was to try to comprehend the dichotomy between a relatively high unemployment rate and the concerns that were repeatedly expressed among employers about the difficulty of finding employees with good work ethics. Usually a shortage of workers is an indication of a *low* unemployment rate, so this discrepancy was puzzling and troubling. That issue needs to be recognized, studied, and resolved. Yet, at least one local manufacturer seems to have overcome the challenge of recruiting and retaining excellent employees. We believe Peet Shoe Dryer has a lesson to teach employers throughout Idaho that can help us address that issue.

Another issue that the community will have to face is its receptivity to change and its willingness to manage growth. We heard many community residents express appreciation for the way St. Maries



is right now. When asked about how they wanted to see the community grow in the future, some said they want the community to “stay the same as we are.” We inferred that they are not necessarily opposed to economic development, but they don’t want to see the many good aspects of the community, such as its size and safety, change for the worse. Continuing community-wide discussion about its desired future, and planning for growth, will be essential.

A third topic that arose was the concern that some leaders have about the pervasive presence of illegal drugs in the community. Several comments were made about the

degree to which the use of illegal drugs by several generations of county residents is affecting law enforcement, education, poverty reduction efforts, worker attitudes, availability, and preparedness, and many other facets of society. We also heard concerns about the viability of the local hospital. All of these issues affect the community’s ability to support local businesses and develop and implement strategies for economic diversification.

## **Observations, Recommendations, and Resources**

### **Issue1: The Importance of Planning**

#### *Observation*

The North Idaho Panhandle is being discovered. As this discovery process grows, small communities encounter an obvious breakdown in the homogeneity of “local rule.” New people move to the area with new ideas. This can be very good or very bad!

#### ***Recommendations***

This community needs to develop a plan for their growth that is the result of a community-wide collaboration. These efforts include developing and updating a Comprehensive Plan, developing and enforcing zoning ordinances that match the Comprehensive Plan, developing impact/linkage fee structures, etc. This plan needs to pay particular attention to encouraging business growth in the Primary Industry business base, such as manufacturing. The proposed development of Section 34 prior to establishing such provisions for growth is potentially devastating socially and fiscally. The cliché “plan your future or someone else will plan it for you,” is very applicable in this case.



#### *Resources*

Communities from southern and eastern Idaho have made such transitions. Regions of Idaho have historically differed culturally, geographically, economically, and socially.

A very good example of a North Idaho community that has undergone quick impact within the past four years and dealt with that impact in a fairly positive manner (i.e. balancing the need for a diversified primary industry and secondary industry base) is Kellogg, Idaho. This community has much in common with neighboring St. Maries. We suggest that Walter Hadley, the City of Kellogg’s Planning and Zoning Administrator, be contacted at his office at City Hall at 786-9131 for advice.

### **Issue 2: St. Maries and Tourism**

Tourism is a diversification tool that promotes tourism related small business development and non-tourism business development. The goals of tourism development are to enhance community assets for everyone’s enjoyment and generate more business opportunities and income for residents.

Yet tourism can be a doubled-edged sword - tourism for economic development vs. retaining the small town atmosphere and community values. Growth through tourism is inevitable; but growth will occur anyway. St. Maries, as a community, will have to decide what its assets are, what it wants to share with the visiting public, and what to retain for the private use of its citizens. A community should plan for tourism to manage its growth and to preserve community assets, instead of tourism driving the community.

Branding of the community around its logging history and heritage and its scenic access are natural components of a local and regional marketing campaign. A four-season concept should be the focus of a long-term recreational and tourism effort. A very well-thought out Comprehensive Plan,



with corresponding zoning ordinances and fee structures, is the first step to be taken before launching into a full-fledged Tourism Campaign.

### *Observations*

St. Maries has a wealth of untapped resources that can be developed into a viable tourism industry. It enjoys a timber industry that has played a major role in shaping what St. Maries is today and what



it will be in the future. The area has a strong history of logging with numerous natural assets to draw people to the area. That history is displayed on a very limited basis with a series of beautiful murals. The City is located at the junction of two scenic byways and two rivers. The St. Joe River is a navigable river and has public access within walking distance of downtown. Small tugboats currently "herd" logs down river, but this activity is slated for closure within the next year. During the summer season St. Maries enjoys increased recreational travel on the river, but this does not appear to have a

significant impact on downtown. Golf enthusiasts boat or fly into St. Maries, but bypass the downtown area. Heyburn State Park receives visitors throughout the year, but this does not seem to translate to visitors traveling seven miles to St. Maries to spend time and money. Art & cultural events are offered on a very limited basis. The City is located near hunting, fishing, boating, and trails, and there is a prevalence of antiques in the area. Mr. Jack Buell owns a notable collection of Corvettes.

Despite the community's many strengths, we observed several weaknesses. The community has limited quality lodging options and poor signage for the lodging that is available. There is a lack of locally made products in the retail stores. The Chamber of Commerce website has limited information with no listing of lodging or businesses, no links to related websites and a generic activity calendar. A Google search on "St. Maries" resulted in a website



([www.stmariesidaho.com](http://www.stmariesidaho.com)) which provides specific dates for some of the activities. These dates coincide with the weekends from 2002. There is limited informational signage in and around town. Frontline personnel lack knowledge on things to see or do in the area that would interest visitors.

### *Recommendations*

We recommend that the St. Maries Chamber of Commerce conduct a survey of St. Maries' tourism/recreation assets and determine which assets residents are willing to share with others and

which assets they want to preserve for the community. Of the assets the community determines it is willing to share, identify the primary draw, develop a brand around the draw, and promote the activities/facilities that reinforce the brand. Increase website and brochure exposure of these findings to promote participation and visitation. Take a look at the annual events calendar. We also recommend hospitality training for the personnel in the local retail/tourism industry.



Develop package weekend experiences utilizing local bed & breakfast establishments and community events, in coordination with Heyburn State Park and golf enthusiasts. An example for December would be Friday & Saturday night lodging at a bed & breakfast, Christmas Tree Lighting and Parade, horse drawn carriage ride, street fair, wine-and-dine dinner and a souvenir St. Maries Christmas ornament. Most of these activities are already in place. One could offer shuttle service from the bed & breakfasts and the Park, which would make the package more user-friendly and

cut down on parking issues. Developing a get-away package that would appeal to Heyburn State Park tourists who are there for particular reasons (biking, bird watching, etc.) would encourage them to come into St. Maries. How about a “Fly Tying Retreat Weekend” for fisherman (or women)? Or, when men are hunting and fishing, how about developing a women’s “Left Behind Day” that includes a manicure, pedicure, ladies tea and an invitation to a book reading, watercolor, quilting, or craft class, or to a visit to a local lavender farm?

- Expand other special interest group events that have already discovered St. Maries on their own (i.e. Corvette Club, Single Action Shooting Society (SASS), motorcyclists).
- A formal “St. Maries History Walk” needs to be established featuring the murals and the logger memorial. The current mural brochure that is printed and distributed on limited basis needs to be expanded. This “walk” should be featured on the Chamber/City website. Utilize [www.visitid.org](http://www.visitid.org) for tourism advertisements.
- Use the tugboats as a tourist mode of transportation to view the beautiful banks of the river, especially on the undeveloped side. Add a demonstration or a competition to Paul Bunyan Days, or make them their own signature event. How about a “Learn to ‘Herd’ Logs” authentic logging recreation experience?
- Develop a logging museum, or a once a month tour of Potlatch mill, to celebrate the continued prosperity of the timber industry in St. Maries.
- St. Maries has a wealth of “old families,” such as Europeans who homesteaded the area, and Native Americans – the original inhabitants. Develop a series of speakers in the form of a speaker’s bureau to share their cultures and stories.
- Work with Coeur d’Alene Tribe to develop “Coeur d’Alene Tribe Cultural Center.”
- Start a music jam session in the park during the summer months, bringing the activity inside to the school or senior center in the winter. Have the Chamber of Commerce or a downtown association sponsor sidewalk art contests. Develop a “First Friday” featuring one-business



open house per month with beverages, hors d'oeuvres, music, or ... the list of possibilities is endless.

- Remember to think about handicap accessibility when designing tourism amenities.

#### *Resources*

##### **Washington State University**

David Sprott, Associate Professor, Marketing, Washington State University, Todd Hall Room 390, Pullman, WA 99164, (509) 335-6896, dsprott@wsu.edu

##### **USDA, Rural Development**

Margaret Hair, Business Program Specialist, USDA, Rural Development, 7830 Meadowlark Way, Ste C3, Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815, (208) 762-4939, ext 117, margaret.hair@id.usda.gov, [www.rurdev.usda.gov/id](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/id)

##### **Idaho Transportation Department**

Don Davis, Staff Engineer/Planner, Idaho Transportation Department, 600 W. Prairie Ave., Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815, (208) 772-8019, don.davis@itd.idaho.gov

##### **St. Maries High School**

John Cordell, Principal, St. Maries High School, 424 Hells Gulch Rd., St. Maries, ID 83861, (208)45-2142

##### **St. Maries Chamber of Commerce**

Michele Ott, Office Manager, St. Maries Chamber of Commerce, 906 Main Ave., St. Maries, ID 83861, (208) 245-3563, manager@stmarieschanber.org

##### **Lewis-Clark State College**

Lewis-Clark State College, Deborah Snyder, Director, LCSC Continuing Education & Community Events, 500 8<sup>th</sup> Ave., Lewiston, ID 83501, (208) 790-2726, djsnyder@lcsc.edu



##### **Issue 3: Ongoing Downtown Development**

A downtown can be a gathering place, the place to go whether it is to shop or to socialize. This can increase business by being a pleasant place to shop and by giving people a reason for coming downtown. Cities that create compelling reasons for residents and visitors to shop in a downtown are cities that are perceived as vibrant places to live and work.

##### *Observations*

The streetscape for the core downtown business corridor was recently improved. Several downtown buildings have been or are

in the process of being refurbished to the original architecture. The waterway is within walking distance of downtown. A small park was developed in a vacant main street lot.

We noted a lack of connection between the waterway and downtown. Several business offices are located on Main Street. The buildings on downtown Main Street have multiple facades (e.g. turn of the century, log, modern, etc.). The retail stores have a lack of local products available for sale and have limited hours of operation.

A component to economic development is enhanced specialty retail in the downtown core. Services such as law firms, accounting agencies, and real estate agents are currently located at the

street level. One opportunity may be to locate these types of services to the second floor of buildings and have more retail businesses on the main level to promote more “window shopping.” Many citizens in the community also noted that the downtown businesses had very limited hours of operation. Businesses were frequently open from 10:00-5:00 creating difficulties for people wishing to shop in the evening hours after work. More specialty shops like antique and unique item shops will also work to attract more tourism. Enhancing the connection from downtown to the river front will help bring traffic in from the river to downtown and getting people from downtown to the river. Driving through St. Maries one hardly notices there is a river just a few blocks from Main Street. Working to create a designated connection point that will guide boat traffic into downtown and foot traffic to the river is a great opportunity for tourism development.

Downtown parking is frequently a problem for many communities. In a city trying to attract tourism, limited parking to a specified period of time is discouraging to tourists interested in spending time in downtown shops. There is a definite need for designated parking areas for downtown patrons. There is currently a limit of 90-minute parking.

### *Recommendations*



We recommend the community encourage office/service businesses locate to secondary streets or to second floor of main street buildings. To encourage the traveler through town to stop, the focus of the primary level of Main Street should be retail, window-shopping businesses. Downtown businesses should meet to review their strategies for expanding the economic

trade downtown. The strategies may include utilizing the collective resources to market and promote the downtown as a shopping sector, extending the retail hours as a way to expand business and to encourage the conventional local workforce to shop downtown, expanding downtown parking limit to 120 minutes to encourage exploring and browsing by visitors, encouraging employees to park at secondary sites to leave primary parking for customers, utilizing the “Main Street Program” as a template for long-term strategic planning.

We recommend the city incorporate the St. Joe River into downtown by drawing waterway travelers into town and downtown visitors to the waterway facilities. Directional signage and an inviting walkway between the public docks and downtown will encourage visitors to spend a longer period in the downtown area. The small park provides another opportunity to draw locals and visitors to downtown. We recommend the St. Maries Council for the Arts survey its members for potential cultural activities (e.g. musicians, art displays) that could be held at the site during the evenings and weekends in the summer.

We recommend the formation of a downtown “visioning” committee. Place historic plaques on older buildings, and develop a common downtown theme for storefronts, lights, etc. A logging theme might be added to the downtown area by adding wood or metal sculptures at street corners, in the center median or at the one existing pocket park, or, alternatively, at the city park, which would tie the existing fairground theme to downtown.

### *Resources*

#### **St. Maries Council for the Arts**

Jeff Baker, (208) 676-1042, [jpbaker@abcinet.net](mailto:jpbaker@abcinet.net)

### **Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation**

Tami Johnson, North Region Grant Specialist, Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, 2750 W. Kathleen Ave., Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815, (208) 769-1511, [tjohnson@idpr.state.id.us](mailto:tjohnson@idpr.state.id.us)

### **Idaho Transportation Department**

Don Davis, Staff Engineer/Planner, Idaho Transportation Department, 600 W. Prairie Ave., Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815, (208) 772-8019, [don.davis@itd.idaho.gov](mailto:don.davis@itd.idaho.gov)

### **National Main Street Center of the National Trust for Historic Preservation**

Teresa Lynch, Main Street Program Officer, National Main Street Center of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1785 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20036, (202) 588.6219 [teresa\\_lynch@nthp.org](mailto:teresa_lynch@nthp.org), [www.mainstreet.org](http://www.mainstreet.org)

### **Idaho Department of Commerce & Labor**

Dennis Porter, Community Development Specialist, Idaho Department of Commerce & Labor, P.O. Box 83720, Boise, ID 83720-0093, (208) 334-2470, [dennis.porter@cl.idaho.gov](mailto:dennis.porter@cl.idaho.gov)

### **USDA Rural Development**

Mac Cavasar, Area Manager, USDA, Rural Development, 7830 Meadowlark Way, Ste C3, Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815, (208) 762-4939, ext 126, [mac.cavasar@id.usda.gov](mailto:mac.cavasar@id.usda.gov), [www.rurdev.usda.gov/id](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/id)

## **Issue 4: The Communities Presence on the Worldwide Web**



### *Observations*

A website provides an opportunity for the world to beat a path to your door. If it is excellent, it will inspire and motivate visitors and shoppers and help make residents even more proud of their community. If it is poorly designed and poorly maintained, and if it is difficult to navigate, it will discourage or turn away visitors, shoppers, and residents. And if it doesn't exist, that is almost as bad as closing the door, throwing away the welcome mat, and pulling out all the directional signs. *For the purpose of the World Wide Web, if a community doesn't have a functioning website, it doesn't exist.* It will lose business.

St. Maries has two predominant websites – [www.stmariesidaho.com](http://www.stmariesidaho.com) (St. Maries Gazette) and [www.stmarieschamber.org](http://www.stmarieschamber.org) (St. Maries Chamber of Commerce). This can be very confusing to potential visitors. If someone is interested in visiting the area and Googles “St. Maries Chamber of Commerce,” they get very little information about services or accommodations. One of the main feature pages presents St. Maries as a retirement community, which is why the majority of growth in St. Maries has been those individuals who are purchasing their second (or fifth) home, do not reside year ‘round, or contribute to the census figures and tax base. If someone Googles “St. Maries, Idaho,” the first link is to the St. Maries Gazette page, which gives a much more in-depth picture of what St. Maries has to offer.

### *Recommendations*

Combine the two websites. It will save money and confusion. Take the information from both sites, eliminate the duplications and you would have a comprehensive presentation of what St. Maries is and what it has to offer. To promote the region, link St. Maries' website with the websites of neighboring communities or with similar interests and events. For example, all the communities on a given Scenic Byway could be linked to form a “virtual” Byway. The website should be updated



and refreshed on a routine basis. *This is one of the simplest, least expensive, and most important things St. Maries can do for itself, and it can begin immediately!*

### *Resources*

If St. Maries High School has a computer technology or business class, we recommend they assume the responsibility for developing and maintaining the website as a class project. This would promote youth participation and a sense of ownership in their community.

Use one or the other of the webmasters already doing the website – share the expense. If the St. Maries Gazette is doing a good job with its website, perhaps it can sponsor or mentor students or residents to maintain and expand the website.

Check out other area chamber websites, and “borrow” some of their features and adapt them to portray St. Maries more effectively. For example, look at the Kamiah Chamber of Commerce website. Another excellent website is [pocatelloidaho.com](http://pocatelloidaho.com). A contact for the Kamiah Chamber of Commerce is Debbie Evans, a member of the Economic Development Focus Group at 208-935-0764.

### **Internet Solutions for Government**

Many cities lack the capacity to create websites and resources like Govoffice.com offer a great alternative: Internet Solutions for Government. Many webpage templates are available at <http://www.govoffice.com/>. For more information, contact Leon Duce, Association of Idaho Cities at 344-8594.

### **Clearwater Web Solutions**

Another resource is Clearwater Web Solutions, based in Orofino. The contact is Pam Jones. She can be reached at (208) 476-4549.

### **Kamiah Chamber of Commerce**

P.O. Box 1124, 518 Main Street, Kamiah, ID 83536, 208-935-2290, [info@kamiahchamber.com](mailto:info@kamiahchamber.com)

## **Issue 5: Signage and Way-Finding**



### *Observations*

There is an opportunity to improve the traveler signage. The primary purpose of the signage is to safely guide visitors along the most appropriate route for the tourist's journey while in the area, or to indicate facilities that a tourist would not reasonably expect to find in St. Maries area. Signage could include information, traveler services, recreational activities and cultural interest.

Coming into St. Maries, team members had to stop and ask directions to downtown. The local host assigned to a vehicle the first evening had difficulty

giving directions to the Aqua Park and there weren't any signs. There are no signs or maps located at the Aqua Park highlighting St. Maries' attractions or what is available in downtown and how to get there. On Main Street there are no signs indicating where City Hall, County Office Building or the

Senior Center are located. Hughes House has signage indicating that it is the Visitor Center, but the Visitors Center is actually located in the Chamber of Commerce/TimberPlus office. The Chamber Office signage is nondescript and not easily identifiable. There are large signboards located at the Hughes House that are not being utilized. There is no centralized place to pick up brochures and information about St. Maries when the Chamber of Commerce and Hughes House are closed. There were no directional signs from the main road or any identifying signage at the St. Joe Bed & Breakfast, which made it difficult to locate the B&B for our group breakfast.

#### *Recommendations*

- Utilizing the logging community history, create visible St. Maries branding, “Welcome to St. Maries” sign. The Loggers Memorial is a fabulous work of art; perhaps that type of design can be continued or integrated throughout the community.
- Establish an information kiosk at Aqua Park.
- Use the pictorial map of St. Maries, construct wayfinding maps at the Aqua Park and at the signboards at Hughes House.
- Encourage local businesses offering visitor services (lodging, food, etc.) to develop their own signs for their establishments. Maybe have a contest or have them combine together and commission one artist/sign maker to do them all.
- Develop and implement non-obtrusive, uniform guidelines for city, county and service signage.
- Create a sandwich board type sign for either the sidewalk or within the median, utilizing the universal “?” to identify the Chamber/Visitor Center. Make sure this is on the pictorial map.
- Add brochure racks to the Hughes House signboard area for a few informational pieces to be available during their off hours.

#### *Resources*

##### **Idaho Commission on the Arts**

Delta James, a member of the St. Maries Community Review visiting team, and a contributor to the Economic Development Focus Group, is an excellent resource. She is the Community Development Manager at the Idaho Commission on the Arts, and can be reached at (208) 334-2119 or [djames@arts.idaho.gov](mailto:djames@arts.idaho.gov).

**DawnMarie Beckman**, Eggen Signs, Kamiah, at 208-935-0372.

**Scenic Byway Committee**, Mary Jahn, Region 2, at 208-983-9107.



#### **Issue 6: Strengthening St. Maries Economy**

##### *Observations*

St. Maries has a strong reliance on the timber industry with major employers in wood product manufacturing and logging. The heavy reliance on one industry and a few major employers places the community at risk for economic decline based on the business cycles of that particular industry.

*For example, the Potlatch mill is the largest employer and relies on several smaller businesses to deliver raw material to the mill. This creates a strong economic dependency on a single company. While there are smaller employers in the area providing living wage jobs, there are also opportunities for diversification within the timber-based industry as well as growth and establishment of new industries. Some of our ideas for improving the local community follow.*

### *Recommendations*

#### **1. Diversification Within the Timber Industry**

St. Maries sits among the “Saudi Arabia of trees” with 75% of the county in timberland. Opportunities abound for diversification within the timber industry. One such opportunity is in biomass. An example of how this can work is found in Council, in southwestern Idaho, where a facility utilizes biomass to heat a school. Biomass can also be utilized to produce power through cogeneration facilities. This power could be used for public buildings in St. Maries or possibly sold back to Avista.

Other opportunities for diversification within the timber industry include attracting or developing value-added wood manufacturers. The more value that can be added to the raw material produced in the area, the greater economic impact is gained. There are many different types of value-added manufacturers that could be targeted for recruitment from outside of St. Maries or developed with local entrepreneurs. Types of wood products produced could include cabinetry, furniture, flooring, log cabins, window frames and doors, fences, pallets, stakes, and much more. Attracting manufacturers to St. Maries can be done through targeting existing businesses within that industry that are currently located outside of Idaho. St. Maries can offer businesses an advantage through a lower cost of doing business compared to their current locations. The other strategy to build a value-added manufacturing base is working with local entrepreneurs to develop new businesses or expand existing businesses. Many entrepreneurs need assistance in understanding and implementing the business practices in their operations. TimberPlus could play a role in establishing training opportunities and business counseling to help entrepreneurs through the process. A wood products business incubator may be viable, too.



#### **2. Diversify Beyond the Timber Industry**

The second opportunity to diversify the St. Maries' economy is to look outside of the timber industry and diversify into alternative industries. To be successful, St. Maries should identify its strengths and weaknesses and determine in which industries it can have a competitive advantage. One such industry is tourism through arts and culture or outdoor recreation. Strategically located next to Heyburn State Park and the St. Joe River, which leads into Lake Coeur d'Alene, there are many opportunities to capture increased tourism through cultural tourism. (This topic will be covered in detail elsewhere in our report.)

Also it is important to improve or obtain infrastructure. For example, many of the citizens in the community identified the need for lodging. To attract a hotel to the area the community could conduct a feasibility study for a larger lodging facility. Once completed, the study would provide a marketing piece to recruit a hotel developer to the area. Part of this process could include the identification of a potential site for a hotel, the potential room nights, and the target market for the hotel. This information could provide valuable data for the business model and work to secure capital resources, and could be especially helpful if there is an entrepreneur in the community who is interested in developing the hotel locally. The Ashley Inn in Cascade, Idaho was developed by a local entrepreneur who saw a need in the community for upscale lodging.



The Lodge at River's Edge in Orofino is another excellent example. St. Maries also could work with local outfitters and guides to promote outdoor recreation, which might also help to stimulate the development of a hotel.

Niche manufacturing is another opportunity to diversify the economy. Niche manufacturing in areas that utilize the skills of the available workforce, such as machine shops manufacturing specialty items, would fit well in the St. Maries' economy. To achieve a niche manufacturing base the community could attract or develop these small manufactures from either elsewhere (out of state or out of region) or through local entrepreneurs. Many rural communities throughout Idaho have entrepreneurs in niche manufacturing operating small businesses out of garages, storage units, or shops. Part of the challenge to expanding these businesses is identifying them and assisting them in areas of need, but it can be done and it can be a successful diversification strategy.

It is important to note the difference between short-term economic gains and long-term sustainable economic growth. During the Review, several interviewees mentioned housing developers looking at St. Maries for higher-end housing. Residential growth does not typically pay for itself. Jack Schultz's Boomtown USA reminds us that residential development uses \$1.17 worth of public services for every dollar it pays to municipal governments, whereas commercial entities utilize \$0.27 of services for every dollar in taxes they contribute. Based on this analysis, it would be prudent to reconsider residential development and upscale retiree housing as the cornerstone of a local economic diversification strategy. Is this the best use of Section 34?



### 3. Help Local Businesses

The third opportunity to further strengthen the St. Maries economy is in assisting existing businesses to expand their operations or working with those that may be in jeopardy of closing. Establishing a formal business retention and expansion program with the staff capacity of TimberPlus and the local Idaho Commerce and Labor office will help to build solid relationships with the businesses currently in St. Maries. A formal program consists of an economic development professional or a committee of volunteers establishing a schedule of businesses to visit, developing targeted questions to ask when talking to businesses, tracking the data gathered, and responding to questions or problems as they arise. Through this process, the economic developer may be able to identify areas of market expansion the business has not explored and identify appropriate resources. Many business retention and expansion programs focus on businesses within the primary industries of the community with the assumption that if primary businesses succeed the retail and service sector that supports those businesses will also succeed.

Other efforts in business retention and expansion could include conducting Phase Two of the downtown revitalization efforts and working with the businesses that will be affected during the construction process. Open communication between business and government is an important component to downtown revitalization efforts. Throughout the Review we heard from multiple businesses that they felt "out of the loop." They want to know when Phase Two will be completed and the details of what would be done. This is valuable information to a business that may need to adjust its business plan during down times due to construction.

#### **4. Enhance Telecommunications Capacity**

A fourth opportunity to strengthen the St. Maries' economy is to help the many businesses with a strong reliance on telecommunications technology by enhancing the availability, affordability, and capacity of telecommunications infrastructure. Email, e-commerce, information and other resources that are available via the Internet are vital to doing business. This is especially important for those who telecommute to their jobs from thousands of miles away. Opportunities may exist to partner with the Coeur d'Alene Tribe and St. Maries Gazette to enhance the broadband capacity in St. Maries. The Tribe has recently put in place the infrastructure for wireless internet access and the Gazette currently offers internet access. An opportunity to enhance the internet infrastructure may result from a partnership between these two entities and additional resources from outside entities.

The other alternative to growing businesses utilizing the Internet could include providing adequate resources for entrepreneurs to start web-based businesses. Training needs may include business basics as well as effectively marketing on the Internet or web development.

Resources

Recommendation 1:

#### **Pete Johnston**

2164 Hwy 95 Council, ID 83612, (208) 253-6098, [epj@ctcweb.net](mailto:epj@ctcweb.net)

For Biomass utilization information contact Pete Johnson, chair of the biomass committee in Council, he can also provide information on a model to examine the opportunities available for biomass in the community

#### **Forest Products Laboratory**

<http://www.fpl.fs.fed.us/index.html>

**Montana Community Development Center**, 103 East Main, Missoula, MT 59802 Phone (406) 728-9234 Fax (406) 542-6671.

#### **Panhandle Lakes Resource Conservation & Development**

Kim Golden, Coordinator 7830 Meadowlark Way, Suite C1, Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815, (208) 762-4939, ext. 115 [kgolden@plrcd.org](mailto:kgolden@plrcd.org), <http://www.plrcd.org/index.htm>

The regional RC&D council can be an excellent resource for working to promote value added wood manufacturing and other community development opportunities.

#### **Avista**

Paul Anderson, 208-769-1320, [Paul.Anderson@avistacorp.com](mailto:Paul.Anderson@avistacorp.com)

Paul is an active partner in economic development within their service area and may have further information on economic development strategies and how Avista can serve as a partner in cogeneration facilities.

#### **Small Business Development Center – Post Falls**

Bill Jhung, 208-666-8009, [william\\_jhung@nic.edu](mailto:william_jhung@nic.edu), North Idaho College SBDC, 525 W. Clearwater Loop, Post Falls, ID 83854-9400

The SBDC provides many services to assist existing and start-up businesses. They offer one-on-one consulting services as well as group settings including trainings such as the "Small Business Boot Camp" which is a short course to introduce the basics of starting a business and help an entrepreneur determine if they really want to start a business.

### **Panhandle Area Council**

Jim Deffenbaugh, (208) 772-0584 ext. 3005, Jimd@pacni.org, 11100 Airport Drive Hayden, ID 83855, <http://www.pacni.org/pachome.htm>

The Panhandle Area Council has expertise in assisting businesses in accessing capital through their revolving loan program and their business incubator. Jim also has expertise in the establishment of business incubators and determining if they are feasible in a community. PAC has also served as a regional partner in economic development programs.

### **Idaho Commerce and Labor**

Beth Ineck, 208-334-2650 ext 2136, beth.ineck@business.idaho.gov 700 West State St. Boise, ID 83720, and Shirley Ackerman in the St. Maries office, 208-245-2518, sackerma@cl.idaho.gov

The economic development group in Boise can play a strong role in helping to recruit businesses to St. Maries as well as providing services to existing businesses. Some of the services available include: conducting a cost of businesses comparison between Idaho and another state, assistance with international trade, doing business with the government, applying for SBIR funding, and workforce development.

### Recommendation 2:

#### **USDA – Rural Development**

Margaret Hair, (208) 762-4939 Ext 117, margaret.hair@id.usda.gov, USDA Rural Development 7830 Meadowlark Ste.C3, Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815, <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/>

USDA – Rural Development has grant programs available that can assist a community in conducting a hotel feasibility study. The study can be an important component when trying to recruit a hotel developer to the community or assisting an entrepreneur in the financing process.

### **Ashley Inn**

Ashley & Katrin Thompson, 866-382-5621, <http://www.theashleyinn.com/>

The owners of the Ashley Inn are a great example of how local entrepreneurs developed a first-rate hotel in Cascade Idaho. Paul Pippenger is an excellent contact for the Lodge at River's Edge in Orofino, Idaho. He can be reached at (208) 476-3509. See [www.lodgeatriversedge.com](http://www.lodgeatriversedge.com) for more information about that hotel.

### **Small Business Development Center – Post Falls**

Bill Jhung, 208-666-8009, william\_jhung@nic.edu, North Idaho College SBDC, 525 W. Clearwater Loop, Post Falls, ID 83854-9400. Website: [www.idahospdc.org](http://www.idahospdc.org).

The SBDC provides many services to assist existing and start-up businesses. They offer one-on-one consulting services as well as group settings including trainings such as the "Small Business Boot Camp" which is a short course to introduce the basics of starting a business and help an entrepreneur determine if they really want to start a business.

### **Idaho Commerce and Labor & North Idaho Travel Council**

Carl Wilgus, 208-334-2650 ext 2149, 700 West State St. Boise, ID 83720,

The tourism division in Boise is available to assist communities with marketing for tourism development. The North Idaho Travel Council is also available to assist with marketing efforts and has grant dollars available.

### Recommendation 3:

#### **Idaho Commerce and Labor**

Beth Ineck, 208-334-2650 ext 2136, beth.ineck@business.idaho.gov 700 West State St. Boise, ID 83720, and Shirley Ackerman in the St. Maries office, 208-245-2518, sackerma@cl.idaho.gov

The economic development group in Boise can assist the St. Maries community in establishing a formal business visitation program and tracking the data. The local office can play an important role in this process through actively engaging in the visitation program. The employees of ICL are also knowledgeable of the resources available to businesses that may be struggling.

#### **Small Business Development Center – Post Falls**

Bill Jhung, 208-666-8009, [william\\_jhung@nic.edu](mailto:william_jhung@nic.edu), North Idaho College SBDC, 525 W. Clearwater Loop, Post Falls, ID 83854-9400. Website: [www.idahospdc.org](http://www.idahospdc.org).

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#### **Panhandle Area Council**

Jim Deffenbaugh, (208) 772-0584 ext. 3005, [Jimd@pacni.org](mailto:Jimd@pacni.org), 11100 Airport Drive Hayden, ID 83855, <http://www.pacni.org/pachome.htm>

The Panhandle Area Council has expertise in assisting businesses in accessing capital through their revolving loan program and their business incubator. Jim also has expertise in the establishment of business incubators and determining if they are feasible in a community. PAC has also served as a regional partner in economic development programs.

#### **USDA – Rural Development**

Margaret Hair, (208) 762-4939 Ext 117, [margaret.hair@id.usda.gov](mailto:margaret.hair@id.usda.gov), 7830 Meadowlark Ste.C3, Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815, <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/>

USDA – Rural Development has grant programs available that can assist a community in conducting a hotel feasibility study. The study can be an important component when trying to recruit a hotel developer to the community or assisting an entrepreneur in the financing process.

#### **Madison Economic Development Council**

Clair Boyle, 208-356-6484, [clair@idahobusiness.org](mailto:clair@idahobusiness.org), 424 West 4<sup>th</sup> South, Rexburg, ID 83440

Clair has an excellent established business visitation program in which he works closely with the elected officials in his area to call on businesses and help to identify issues and resources in a timely fashion.

#### Recommendation 4:

#### **Small Business Development Center – Post Falls**

Bill Jhung, 208-666-8009, [william\\_jhung@nic.edu](mailto:william_jhung@nic.edu), North Idaho College SBDC, 525 W. Clearwater Loop, Post Falls, ID 83854-9400. Website: [www.idahospdc.org](http://www.idahospdc.org).

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## **Idaho Commerce and Labor**

Beth Ineck, 208-334-2650 ext 2136, [beth.ineck@business.idaho.gov](mailto:beth.ineck@business.idaho.gov) 700 West State St. Boise, ID 83720, and Shirley Ackerman in the St. Maries office, 208-245-2518, [shirley.ackerman@cl.idaho.gov](mailto:shirley.ackerman@cl.idaho.gov).

The economic development group in Boise can play a strong role in helping to recruit businesses to St. Maries as well as providing services to existing businesses. Some of the services available include: conducting a cost of businesses comparison between Idaho and another state, assistance with international trade, doing business with the government, applying for SBIR funding, and workforce development.

## **Lone Eagle Consulting**

Frank Odasz, 406-683-6270, [frank@lone-eagles.com](mailto:frank@lone-eagles.com), 2200 Rebich Lane, Dillon, MT 59725  
<http://lone-eagles.com/>

Lone Eagle Consulting works with both individual entrepreneurs as well as rural communities having a desire to educate their citizens on working with the internet to establish a more sustainable economy.

## **USDA – Rural Development**

Margaret Hair, (208) 762-4939 Ext 117, [margaret.hair@id.usda.gov](mailto:margaret.hair@id.usda.gov), 7830 Meadowlark Ste.C3, Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815, <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/>

USDA – Rural Development has programs to assist in the deployment of broadband service to rural communities.

## **Issue 7: Entrepreneurship Development**

### *Observations*

In each of the four recommendations cited in the immediately preceding section (above), entrepreneurs are mentioned as an important component to diversifying and stabilizing the St. Maries' economy. Entrepreneurship is a critical rural growth strategy. Small, entrepreneurial companies are important drivers of economic growth.

Data shows that these companies create at least two-thirds of all new jobs. For example, Peet Shoe Dryer started as a home-based entrepreneurial enterprise and is now a significant employer in town. That company has been successful at recruiting and retaining talented and hard-working managers and employees. Founded in 1968, it is an example of a modern company operating effectively in a dynamic global marketplace out of a rural Idaho community. If it can be successful, so can other manufacturers and businesses in St. Maries and Benewah County.



The positive quality of life draws people to relocate to the area. However, we are concerned about limited opportunities for businesses to establish retail shops on downtown Main Street, and limited broadband connectivity and a lack of redundancy.

### *Recommendations*

Entrepreneurs thrive in an environment that works to support and promote them. Many things can be done in a community to establish a culture of entrepreneurship. Some communities have worked to engage the youth in entrepreneurial activities through curriculum at the high school, such as Orofino High School. Other communities have established networking opportunities for

entrepreneurs to come together to brainstorm development ideas or share common experiences, such as the *Kickstand* group in Boise. All of these things work to create a culture that supports local entrepreneurs and to recognize that if one fails it is okay – and simply part of the process to becoming a successful entrepreneur. Regional partners can also play a role in helping to foster this type of environment. The Small Business Development Center in Post Falls is an excellent resource to reach out to entrepreneurs with training opportunities as one example. TimberPlus, the St. Maries Chamber of Commerce, and the City are encouraged to work together to create a culture of entrepreneurship in St. Maries.

Actions that will facilitate entrepreneurial development in the region include the following: provide networking opportunities for small business owners/entrepreneurs, establish a business-to-business mentoring program, schedule bi-monthly business education workshops/forums (e.g. accounting, marketing, financing, personnel management, licensing, legal), and sponsor a business boot camp that addresses key steps in starting a business and provides essential information. Facilitate a process for identifying and resolving needs.

We recommend the community hold discussions with the Coeur d’Alene Tribe regarding the extension of broadband service to the east side of the county through its information technology service, Red Spectrum Communications (see below).

#### *Resources*

##### **Coeur d’Alene Tribe**

Sarah L. Carrillo, Office Manager, Coeur d’Alene Tribe, 111 N. 8<sup>th</sup> St., Plummer, ID 83851, (208) 686-2045, [scarrillo@cdatribe-nsn.gov](mailto:scarrillo@cdatribe-nsn.gov), [www.red-spectrum.com](http://www.red-spectrum.com).

##### **St. Maries Chamber of Commerce**

Michele Ott, Office Manager, St. Maries Chamber of Commerce, 906 Main Ave., St. Maries, ID 83861, (208) 245-3563, [manager@stmarieschanber.org](mailto:manager@stmarieschanber.org)

##### **Greater St. Joe Development Foundation**

Kim Schwanz, Executive Director, Greater St. Joe Development Foundation (TimberPlus), 906 Main Ave., St. Maries, ID 83861, (208) 245-2239, [timberplus@smgazette.com](mailto:timberplus@smgazette.com)

##### **Small Business Development Center – Post Falls**

Bill Jhung, 208-666-8009, [william\\_jhung@nic.edu](mailto:william_jhung@nic.edu), North Idaho College SBDC, 525 W. Clearwater Loop, Post Falls, ID 83854-9400; [www.idahosbdc.org](http://www.idahosbdc.org)

The SBDC provides many services to assist existing and start-up businesses. They offer one-on-one consulting services as well as group settings including trainings such as the “Small Business Boot Camp” which is a short course to introduce the basics of starting a business and help an entrepreneur determine if they really want to start a business.

##### **Panhandle Area Council**

Jim Deffenbaugh, (208) 772-0584 ext. 3005, [Jimd@pacni.org](mailto:Jimd@pacni.org), 11100 Airport Drive Hayden, ID 83855, <http://www.pacni.org/pachome.htm>

The Panhandle Area Council has expertise in assisting businesses in accessing capital through their revolving loan program and their business incubator. Jim also has expertise in the establishment of business incubators and determining if they are feasible in a community. PAC has also served as a regional partner in economic development programs.

##### **Idaho Commerce and Labor**

Beth Ineck, 208-334-2650 ext 2136, [beth.ineck@business.idaho.gov](mailto:beth.ineck@business.idaho.gov), P.O. Box 83720, Boise, ID 83720-0093, and Shirley Ackerman in the St. Maries office, 208-245-2518; [shirley.ackerman@cl.idaho.gov](mailto:shirley.ackerman@cl.idaho.gov).



The economic development group in Boise can play a strong role in helping to recruit businesses to St. Maries as well as providing services to existing businesses. Some of the services available include: conducting a cost of businesses comparison between Idaho and another state, assistance with international trade, doing business with the government, applying for SBIR funding, and workforce development.

### **USDA – Rural Development**

Margaret Hair, (208) 762-4939 Ext 117, [margaret.hair@id.usda.gov](mailto:margaret.hair@id.usda.gov), 7830 Meadowlark Ste.C3, Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815, <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/>

USDA – Rural Development has grant programs to facilitate the development of small and emerging private business enterprises. These programs could assist a community in conducting business workshops and business training.

### **Clearwater County Economic Development**

Chris Kuykendall, 208-476-9829, [cceds@orofino-id.com](mailto:cceds@orofino-id.com) P O Box 1826, 217 First Street, Orofino, ID 83544, <http://www.clearwatercounty.org/?EconomicDevelopment>

Chris was an instrumental component in getting the entrepreneurial curriculum known as NxLevel Buz on Biz into the high school classroom. The program has been in the school since the start of the 2005 school year and had a very successful first year.

### **Kickstand**

PO Box 1643, Boise, ID 83701 <http://www.kickstand.org/>

The organization is designed to actively support and engage technology-based entrepreneurs. Kickstand is a non-profit organization run by volunteer members and financially supported by annual sponsors. They hold monthly events to provide a casual forum for members to meet, exchange, share, and showcase ideas.

### **Issue 8: Workforce Training**

#### *Observations*

A lack of workforce was a common concern among residents and employers - with a few exceptions. This problem will be compounded with the expansion of hospitality service businesses, which historically pay less than a livable wage. If someone is making \$5.15 - \$7/hour and then has to pay \$2 - \$5/hour for childcare, what is the incentive to work outside of the home?

#### *Recommendations*

We recommend that employers that are struggling to entice or retain employees take a hard look at employers that are not having a problem. If they cannot afford to pay employee medical, could they provide affordable day care instead? This will open up the work force to women, especially if their husbands have jobs that provide medical benefits.

Develop a School-to-Work program that partners high school students with local businesses. Students can either work on a volunteer basis or be paid. Ask the Idaho Department of Commerce & Labor Local Office do an outreach program to target that 18 – 23 years labor force that is uninformed and unemployed. Utilize the Workforce Investment Act (“WIA”) Program.

Plan a local business Career Day and include advertisement on the radio and in the newspaper. The target audience should include 18-24 year-olds who are struggling in entry-level jobs and who may not know what they want to do with their lives. This is a good way to demonstrate the number and variety of jobs in the area. The Career Day is a great resource for prospective employers to check out the potential work force for school-to-work or apprenticeships.

Pursue a satellite community college campus to teach vocational trades needed by St. Maries' businesses, such as logging, truck driving, nursing, and hospitality.

Schedule a community Hospitality training and invite *everyone*, but especially those people who deal directly with the hospitality services industry and tourists.

#### *Resources*

##### **Idaho Department of Commerce & Labor**

St. Maries Local Office; Shirley Ackerman, Manager. She can be reached at shirley.ackerman@cl.idaho.gov or 245-2518 ext 3813. ICL Tourism Division: Ron Gardner can assist with frontline personnel training, (208) 334-2650 ext. 2156

##### **Workforce Investment Act Program**

A successful Workforce Investment Act Program in Grangeville was cited by one of the report's authors. For more information, contact Melissa Bryant in the Commerce & Labor Grangeville Local Office at (208) 983-0440 ext 3791.

##### **Vocational Consultant**

SL Start, Jody Hoaglund, a vocational consultant, may be helpful. She can be reached in Grangeville at (208) 983-0821.

**Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE)**, in Spokane, at (509) 353-2800. It is affiliated with the Small Business Administration (SBA), also based in Spokane, at (509) 353-2811.

#### **Issue 9: Cultural Tourism Opportunities**

The term "cultural tourism opportunities" refers to the arts, historical, and contemporary elements that could be utilized to preserve, celebrate and promote the unique identity of St. Maries and enhance its economic vitality by encouraging citizen participation and visitation. Overall, St. Maries has the compelling cultural assets, attractive downtown, proximity to extraordinary recreational opportunities, and ability to draw from the Spokane/Coeur d'Alene area population base that, with a little development and promotion, could make an economic impact through cultural tourism. St. Maries close proximity to significant recreational assets like Heyburn State Park, The Trail of the Coeur d'Alenes, area Scenic Byways, and hands-on experiences such as mining or garnet hunting, provide a foundation of visitor traffic that, with a little cultivation, can be enticed to stop, shop, and stay in St. Maries.

The following observations and recommendations are based upon reviews of area marketing publications, visits to main street businesses, the Historic Hughes House, and nearby artist studios, and conversations with representatives of the local arts council, historical society, chamber of commerce, and other community members.



##### *Observations*

St. Maries, for its size, is fortunate to have an active local arts council that presents performing arts opportunities, coordinates an annual arts festival, manages a Main Street gallery storefront, and has a sizable membership. The arts council seems to be

emerging with gusto from a recent downturn of activity in the wake of the loss of a gallery space a few blocks up Main Street from their current gallery location. Like many organizations of its size, the St. Maries Arts Council is being governed by a group of enthusiastic community members who are passionate about the mission of the organization but whose fluctuations in available time and energy result in fluctuations in the organization's programmatic capacity and sustainability and in limited community awareness or support of the organization.

The Arts Council is interested in developing the cultural tourism potential of the community. A few Arts Council board members are actively learning about place-based cultural tourism strategies such as those pioneered by HandMade in America (see Resources below), even traveling to North Carolina for an institute on the subject and beginning the process to identify the unique local cultural assets within the community. The potential and enthusiasm for these efforts is promising, however, the necessary connection and support from the economic development agency, Chamber, and local government is not yet in place to ensure long term success.

The location of the St. Maries Art Gallery, on Main Street, is so new that there is a lack of signage announcing its presence. The gallery space itself is a front corner of a retail store that features an eclectic mix of antiques, crafts, and gifts. The artworks within the gallery represent a variety of mediums, prices, and quality and are fitted into every available display space, creating a cluttered feel that, while allowing a maximum number of artists to be represented, does not best represent the artworks, does little to distinguish the gallery from the adjacent retail space, and does not allow the patron or viewer to fully enjoy (or contemplate buying) any one piece. Some of the artwork was for sale, while others were unclearly marked. A handful of other arts-related businesses are operating in downtown St. Maries, including a top-notch quilt shop and a new framing and art supply store, yet no connection, cross-promotion, or referral between these businesses is evident. Several community festivals and events are held in or near St. Maries including the SmArt Festival, Paul Bunyan Days, the car show, and others coordinated by the many community service groups.

There is little quantifiable evidence of the audience demographics of event attendees, but event coordinators speculate that while the majority of participants are local community members, they do draw a small number of attendees from more than 50 miles away. Overall, event attendance seems to be about the same from one year to the next with, perhaps, small increases in numbers.

Awareness, communication, and cross-promotion among event organizers seem nonexistent, sometimes resulting in overlap and scheduling conflicts that divide audience participation.

St. Maries has a beautiful collection of public artworks. Most of these are murals depicting logging processes and history or significant community events, and are located on the exteriors of privately owned businesses along Main Street downtown. The Logger Memorial is also finely designed and moving. The community decision makers had the foresight to include the murals

as part of downtown revitalization efforts; they are to be commended. However, information about the locations, artists, and origins of the murals was difficult to find. The Chamber of Commerce



does have a brochure highlighting a walking tour of the downtown murals, *but this publication is only made available to visitors if they know to ask.*



Several community members expressed a desire for more evening cultural activities in St. Maries. While most seem aware of, and appreciative of, the occasional performances presented by the St. Maries Arts Council, a desire for regularly scheduled (like every first Friday evening) events was expressed. Several interviewees suggested a dinner theater with guest chefs would not only satisfy this need for evening entertainment, it would also provide a unique dining experience.

St. Maries has a compelling occupational history that is still very much part of its community life today. Logging seems so much a part of everyday life that many community members do not realize how unique and interesting it can be to visitors. Other than through the public artworks, visitors to St. Maries have little opportunity to experience the history of the community. The Historic Hughes House is a valuable asset and has an impressive collection of photos and artifacts, but the collection is badly in need of curating, interpretation, and appropriate archival storage. When touring the Hughes House, it is difficult to understand how the displayed pieces fit together to tell the St. Maries story. Many community members expressed a desire for the logging heritage to be better preserved, celebrated, and shared.

It was difficult to find information about the community's businesses, activities, attractions, or lodging opportunities. Signage in front of the Hughes House indicates that it is a Visitor Information Center. However, the existing exterior kiosk and brochure racks lack information. The limited open hours of the Hughes House do not give visitors ample opportunity to enquire within and, when they can enter, only a few casually displayed brochures in the entryway are provided. The volunteer staff of the historical museum can provide a few helpful suggestions but many of those point visitors out of town to neighboring attractions. Downtown business employees, often the first inquiries visitors make, also lacked an understanding of what there is to do and see in St. Maries.

More visitor information is available at the Chamber of Commerce office. However, the Chamber's open hours are extremely limited and do not correspond with times visitors are likely to arrive. The Chamber's displayed information primarily highlights out of town activities and attractions. A display board in the pocket park across the street is also underutilized, lacking current community information.

Cultural tourists visit a community to experience its arts and history, but they stay to shop and eat. The current business open hours, parking time limit, and product diversity of downtown St. Maries do little to encourage visitors to browse or contribute to the downtown economy. Most tourist-oriented products offered in the downtown businesses are not locally produced, or unique to St. Maries.



### *Recommendations*

#### **Identify cultural assets.**

The cultural assets of a community are more than museums, galleries, or public artworks, they are also the individual artists, cooks, farmers, ranchers, craftspeople, and historians. Sometimes referred to as “the silent industry,” these people make a place unique, create place-specific products, can help provide experience-based tourism opportunities, and are an opportunity for entrepreneurial development. The work begun by the St. Maries Arts Council to identify these assets should be expanded and supported by the economic development agency, Chamber, and city. Wider distribution of the cultural asset survey tool developed by the arts council is needed. Public discussions should be convened and facilitated that ask community members to identify 1) What about St. Maries is unique?, 2) What about St. Maries would you share with visitors?, 3) What do you NOT want to share with visitors?, and 4) What are your cultural assets?.

#### **Develop cultural assets**

Entrepreneurial / small business development education could be made available to area artists, craftspeople, small farm operators, and individuals identified through the cultural asset identification efforts described above.



To increase volunteer participation, audience attendance, and financial support, local arts councils and historical societies, like other nonprofit organizations, must be able to articulate a clear vision, have a current road map on how they want to achieve their vision, be able to articulate (in writing) expectations of volunteers and board members, and continually work to inform and involve the community. Small steps toward achieving these things should be incorporated into every board meeting and addressed in the agenda before details of event planning. Training workshops for board members and key volunteers in topics such as strategic planning, board

development, volunteer management, and fund raising should be offered at least twice per year to increase awareness of nonprofit management best practices.

The Art Gallery coordinators should consider formalizing their selection process for what artworks are exhibited during specific timeframes, providing criteria that would allow for a variety of participating artists to have their work on display but reduces the number at any one given time, creates planned rotating exhibits, and encourages quality works to be featured. To increase visibility, the Art Gallery needs clear signage, should become an active Chamber member, and should seek cross-promotional opportunities with other galleries in the region. Training in display, pricing, and inventory techniques may also be helpful.

- The Hughes House board members should seek state and national historic landmark recognition for their building to increase recognition and funding opportunities. Some expertise from the Idaho State Historical Society or the Idaho Museums Association should be requested for training of board and volunteer members on archival techniques, curating, and display interpretation.

- The rich logging culture of St. Maries could be utilized to generate tourism by either creating an annual event highlighting a logging-related activity like the Oregon Divisional Chainsaw Sculpture Contest in the small community of Reedsport (Perhaps this could be connected to Paul Bunyan Days?), or by creating a year-round destination that showcases logging culture and history.
- To continue building upon St. Maries unique collection of public art, city elected officials should consider adopting a public art ordinance that would dedicate a small percentage (usually 1 to 1.5%) of city capital project budgets to public art. In Idaho four cities currently have such ordinances: Coeur d'Alene, Boise, Moscow, and Rexburg.
- Local products should be featured prominently in retail spaces so visitors have the opportunity to buy a memento that is place-relevant and unique. The Chamber of Commerce could work to develop and promote a "Made in St. Maries" product line similar to the statewide "Buy Idaho" effort. (See [www.buyidaho.org](http://www.buyidaho.org) for more details.)

### **Build awareness of cultural assets within St. Maries**

Rural historical societies and arts councils that enjoy broad community and elected leadership support local efforts to fulfill community economic and community goals through culture. Arts Council and Historical Society members should seek opportunities to participate in community planning and economic development efforts by joining the Chamber, and by establishing a liaison to the city, county, and economic development agency. Also they should seek opportunities to become St. Maries' cultural representatives by networking with other cultural organizations in the region, by attending state and national culture and tourism conferences, and by sharing learned information in public forums. For example, the Arts Council board members who attended the HandMade in America Cultural Tourism Institute could share what they learned at a Chamber gathering, or economic development agency board meeting, or at a free public coffee chat organized by the Arts Council.

A "Tourist in Your Own Town" event could be developed to build local awareness about what there is "to do" in St. Maries. This event would be targeted to front-line service people (gas station attendants, lodging front desk workers, restaurant servers, etc), local residents, business owners, and key volunteers of service organizations and should include a guided tour of local cultural attractions, information about local history, and meals featuring local cuisine.



### **Promote cultural assets to potential visitors**

Today's visitors want unique, experience-based getaways. To control the volume, timing, and type of visitor, communities can package distinct theme-based multi-faceted visitor opportunities into single weekends or several days. For example, HandMade in America has worked with one of their local communities to develop the Sparks and Fire Weekend where a small group of visitors (10-15) pay a premium price to have a two-day experience that features hands-on learning with a ceramic artist where visitors make two ceramic wine goblets; they then go to a metal artist that helps

each participant make a wine rack for two bottles; that is followed by a tour of a local winery and later a lesson from a local chef on preparing a dinner featuring local products. The evening



culminates in lodging at a local B&B. Three weeks later, visitors receive a gift box from the community containing their glazed and fired ceramic goblets, two bottles of local wine, and their handmade wine rack.

A similar but shorter experience package could be developed to provide guests at Heyburn Park a “preview” of St. Maries. Either the long package or the short package could be sponsored or organized by a local bed and breakfast establishment or chamber of commerce.

A promotion plan needs to be developed for these and other visitor opportunities in St. Maries that portrays the wide scope of cultural offerings in the area as well as the natural resource-based recreational opportunities. Brochures, websites, and reader board information needs to be updated and made widely available.

### *Resources*

#### **HandMade in America**

An example of a unique rural cultural tourism approach that utilizes existing community resources. Contact: Becky Anderson, Executive Director. [www.handmadeinamerica.org](http://www.handmadeinamerica.org).

#### **Hands of Harvest**

A rural cultural tourism effort in Montana modeled after HandMade in America. Contact: Wendy Wedum. [www.handsofharvest.org](http://www.handsofharvest.org).

#### **Idaho Heritage Trust**

Expertise and small grants for the preservation and restoration of historic buildings. Contact: Gaytha Pace, Executive Director. [www.idahoheritage.org](http://www.idahoheritage.org).

#### **Idaho Historical Society**

Consultation on organizational development and collections management. Contact: Jody Ochoa, Idaho Historical Museum Administrator. 208-334-2120. [www.idahohistory.net](http://www.idahohistory.net).

#### **North Idaho Travel Alliance**

Regional tourism promotion and networking opportunities. [www.visitnorthidaho.com](http://www.visitnorthidaho.com). 1-888-333-3737.

#### **Idaho Travel Council**

Grants for tourism promotion. [www.visitid.org](http://www.visitid.org).

#### **Travel Industry of America**

Information about marketing strategies and the economic impact of cultural tourism. [www.tia.org](http://www.tia.org).

#### **Vermont Arts Council's Cultural Heritage Tourism Toolkit**

A publication that provides information needed to develop cultural heritage tourism that is authentic, engaging, and sustainable. [www.vermontartscouncil.org](http://www.vermontartscouncil.org). 1-802-828-3291.

#### **Public Art Network**

Information about appropriate public art processes from site selection to art contracts to dedication ceremonies. [www.artsusa.org/services/public\\_art\\_network/](http://www.artsusa.org/services/public_art_network/)

#### **Sample Idaho Public Art Ordinances**

Coeur d'Alene, Boise, Moscow, and Rexburg currently have public art ordinances in place. Copies of ordinances are available by contacting their city clerks. For more information on public art policies contact: Karen Bubb, Public Art Manager, Boise City Arts Commission. 1-208-433-5670.

#### **National Endowment for the Arts**

Challenge America Fast Track Grants are available to assist with cultural tourism development efforts. [www.nea.gov](http://www.nea.gov).

## **Idaho Commission on the Arts**

Nonprofit training and advise, grants for arts events, projects, or education. Contact: Delta James, Community Development Director. 1-800-ART-FUND or [www.arts.idaho.gov](http://www.arts.idaho.gov).

## **CONCLUSIONS**

St. Maries is fortunate to have a strongly supported countywide economic development organization, known locally as TimberPlus. Its efforts are directed by Kim Schwanz. Mr. Schwanz facilitated the St. Maries Community Review and will, no doubt, be heavily involved in considering and implementing many recommendations pertaining to economic development. Many of these ideas have been discussed with him and, in some cases, originated with him. He asked for our advice and we know he will listen carefully and respond thoughtfully.

But it is very important for readers to also realize that the responsibility for following-up to this report is not his alone. That responsibility needs to be shared by all organizations and individuals throughout the community. Business owners and managers, employees, government officials (at all levels), educators, parents, chamber of commerce board members, civic organization leaders and members, and all residents, including youth and retirees, have a common bond and a common destiny. You are united by your love of your community and your desire to improve the quality of life in St. Maries and Benewah County. Yet, you must work *together* to prosper and succeed. We are convinced you *can* do it. *Will* you do it? That's up to you.



## Infrastructure

The Infrastructure Focus Group consisted of Mac Cavasar, Area Director for the USDA Rural Development; Henry Artis, the Director of Idaho TechConnect; Don Davis, Staff Engineer, and Project Development, Idaho Department of Transportation, and John Austin, Panhandle Area Council.

### Observations

St. Maries is a very proud and independent community with a history of mining, logging, and agriculture. The community wants to retain the small town values and appeal, as well as its heritage, while at the same time adapting to impacts of tourism, outside investment, changes in economic base, and the impacts of growth.

In order for the community to grow and prosper, St. Maries will need to capitalize on its exiting infrastructure assets. The upgrade of the aging and outdated portions of its community facilities will need to be addressed to meet future needs due to growth. Adequate medical facilities, recreation infrastructure, and transportation/communication connectivity are key to St. Maries' future and the retention of business and population. The development of these assets is paramount to the community's future viability.

The greatest asset in St. Maries is its citizens. The community as a whole is connected by values that stem from the ethic of hard work and community pride. The independence of its citizenship, along with its willingness to "do for themselves" has provided manpower, dollars and commitment to provide for the needs of the community on every front. With these assets, St. Maries and Benewah County have an extreme advantage over other communities in meeting their goals in the future.

The small town atmosphere, the friendliness of the citizens, and the natural beauty of the area has been discovered by the outside world. With the upgrade of the community's infrastructure, business and population growth will take place. The community, both at the City and County level, needs to plan for and implement regulations that will ensure those assets that make the area so desirable won't be lost.

### General Community Comments and Concerns

The area of focus with reference to infrastructure took into consideration the community's size, economic base, as well as projections of future growth and present infrastructure needs in identifying three general priority areas. The observations made by the review team and the information gathered from the community indicated a need for upgrades to public/government facilities, a need to address community infrastructure with reference to future growth, and a need to continue transportation upgrades. Consideration was given to present condition of facilities, growth projections, economic/social impacts of facilities, highest/best use, and public input as to need. In



addition, the review scope included not only the City of St. Maries, but all of Benewah County as well. The interaction between City, County and State government and areas of jurisdiction were also considered in the team's observation.

In the process of focusing on these primary areas, the infrastructure review team made site visits to the following community facilities:

- Benewah County Courthouse/Jail
- City of St. Maries water treatment plant and sewer treatment facility
- Benewah Community Hospital/Clinic
- St. Maries/Benewah County Airport
- St. Maries City Hall
- Aqua Park
- Downtown and community street/road/railroad system

To address any one of the areas noted will require long term planning to establish funding and partnership opportunities, as well as the building of community support in order to be successful in meeting the future needs of St. Maries and Benewah County.

#### Issue 1: Need for Public/Government Facilities Upgrades

##### *Observations*

The buildings housing local and county services are old and are in need of repair. Most are inadequate in size, design and lack accessibility under ADA. The County Courthouse is undersized and needs updates to accommodate communications, storage of records, and access. The County Jail is grossly inadequate in size and does not meet state/federal regulations. St. Maries' City Hall was damaged by water as the result of leaking pipes. City Hall also is undersized and lacks ADA accommodations. There are limited meeting facilities in the community for public meetings, community events, etc. The Clinic attached to the hospital is undersized. This is a limiting factor on retaining patient numbers in the hospital and providing adequate medical services for the community. There appears to be a need for space and facilities to house ambulance, fire and public safety departments. As is the case in many small communities, funds to resolve these issues are limited and are not easily accessed by public referendum. As is also the case, not one entity is capable of financing or maintaining the facilities needed.

##### *Recommendations*

- Consider the development of partnerships between the County, City, any impacted local nonprofits and the Coeur d'Alene Tribe to pool resources and funding sources.
- Consider the development of multi-purpose or multi-use facilities, i.e. Joint County and City administrative facilities; joint facilities for housing ambulance, fire, and public safety; incorporating a jail utilized by State, City and County, as well as the Tribe; and joint participation in a community health facility including a clinic, family planning, public health or similar types of community services. A feasibility study as to need, size, and location is recommended in any of the areas of consideration.
- Consider the formation of other entities as an option for financing, i.e., Hospital District, Hospital Foundation.

### *Available Resources*

#### Financing resources:

- General Obligation Bonds
- Lease/ purchase agreement
- Profit or Nonprofit financing with lease

### *Advisory/Financing Resources*

#### **Michael Ormsby**

District /entity formation: Michael Ormsby, Attorney at Law, Preston, Gates and Ellis, 1200 Ironwood Drive, Suite 315, Coeur d'Alene, ID, 83814, 208-667-1839

#### **Danna Wetzel**

District/entity formation: Danna Wetzel, Attorney at Law, Wetzel & Wetzel, 1322 Kathleen Ave., Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815, 208-667-3400

#### **Coeur d'Alene Tribe**

Tribal partnership on joint facility: Robert Matt, Administrator, Coeur d'Alene Tribe, 850 A Street, P.O. Box 408, Plummer, ID 83851, 208-686-1800

#### **Panhandle Area Council**

Lease/purchase: Panhandle Area Council, Jim Diffenbaugh, 1110 N. Airport Drive, Hayden, ID 83835, 208-772-0584

Tax increment financing, via formation of an Urban Renewal Agency: Panhandle Area Council, John Austin, 11100 Airport Drive, Hayden, ID 83835, 208-772-0584

Grant writing assistance/administration: Panhandle Area Council, Nancy Mabile, 11100 Airport Drive, Hayden, ID 83935, 208-772-0584

#### **Idaho Department of Commerce and Labor**

Dennis Porter, Community Block Grant Program, Idaho Department of Commerce and Labor, Community Development Specialist, 700 West State Street, P.O. Box 83720, Boise, ID 83720-0093, 208-334-2650

#### **Wells Fargo Bank**

Public finance: Jim Wrigley, Wells Fargo Bank, 3925 Elder Street, Suite 214, Boise, ID 83705, 866-893-3651

#### **USDA Rural Development**

Jeff Beeman, Community facility financing: USDA Rural Development, 3870 Meadowlark Way, Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815, 208-762-4939, ext. 118

#### **Idaho Health Facilities Authority**

Health Care Loans; Rural Technical Assistance Program: Idaho Health Facilities Authority, 1607 West Jefferson, Boise, ID 83702-511, 208-342-8772

### **Issue 2: Future Needs for Growth**

#### *Observations*

With continued growth projected in the region the impact on existing public infrastructure and services will be significant. Along with growth comes the need for more community infrastructure, including recreational, to meet public demand and to maintain the community's ability to retain



population and business. The City of St. Maries and Benewah County will need to plan for growth and at the same time evaluate the capacity of the existing systems serving the community.

#### *Recommendations*

- A review of the water and sewer systems capacity, as well as a rates study.
- The implementation of a metering program to reduce the demand on the water system and increase the life of both the water and the sewer system.
- Pursue the increase of Internet capacity communitywide to enhance business, medical, and educational opportunities.
- Enhance the recreational infrastructure, i.e., Bike paths, park upgrades, river front access.
- Partnership with the Coeur d'Alene Tribe to expand the area of service for the Red Spectrum Communication system.
- Establish a Park and Recreation Department, Pedestrian/bicycle advisory committee at the City level.

#### *Resources*

**Water and Sewer System Capacity Studies;** Various engineering firms

Rates studies/metering: Idaho Rural Water Association, Diane Sauer, 802 W. Bannock, Suite LP103, Boise, ID 83702, 208-343-7001

#### **Rural Community Assistance Corporation**

Jim Phillips, Rate studies, 595 E. State Street, Suite A, Eagle, Id 83616, 208-855-2310

#### **Department of Landscape Architecture**

Planning of recreational and park facilities: University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho

#### **Federal Boating Infrastructure**

Recreational Trails Program, Grants, State Waterways Improvement Grant: Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, P.O. Box 83720, Boise, Id 83720-0065, 208-334-4180



#### **Idaho Department of Lands**

City Landscape Program: Urban /Community Forestry Grants, Community Transportation Enhancement Grants: 3780 Industrial Avenue South, Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815, 208-666-8621

#### **Coeur d'Alene Tribe**

Internet system expansion: Sarah Carrillo, Coeur d'Alene Tribe, 111 N. 8<sup>th</sup>, Plummer, Id. 83851, 208-686-2045

#### **Idaho Department of Commerce and Labor**

Broadband infrastructure: Idaho Department of

Commerce and Labor, 700 West State Street, PO Box 83720, Boise, ID. 208-334-2650.

#### **USDA Rural Development**

Broadband infrastructure: USDA Rural Development, 9173 West Barnes Drive, Ste. 1, Boise, ID 83709. 208-378-5600.

Infrastructure Financing (meters): USDA, Rural Development, 7830 Meadowlark Way, Coeur d'Alene, ID, 83815, 208-762-4939.

### **Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation**

State Waterways Improvement Grants; Recreational Trails Program, Federal Boating Infrastructure Grants: Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, P.O. Box 83720, Boise, ID. 83720-0065, 208-334-4180.

### **Panhandle Area Council**

Grant Writing (meters) Department of Commerce and Labor Block Grants: Panhandle Area Council, Nancy Mabile, 11100 Airport Drive, Hayden, ID, 83935, 208-772-0854.

### **Issue 3: Need for Transportation Upgrades**

#### *Observations*

Transportation issues and transportation design impact business, recreation, and community aesthetics. Downtown St. Maries is an example of how the implementation of upgrades to transportation corridors can improve traffic flows, revive businesses within a transportation corridor, and at the same time enhance the desirability of the area. Corridor improvements also have a direct impact on property values, as well as public perception of the community. In addition to ground transportation needs, consideration of airport and airport services are an important part of the overall transportation infrastructure.

#### *Recommendations*

- Extend downtown Main Street improvements to the east and west.
- Upgrade Streets south of College Ave. with curbs, gutters, and sidewalks.
- Explore construction of a truck route in the railroad right-of-way into, through, and out of town to get logging trucks off Main Street.
- Improve pedestrian/bicycle access community wide.
- Expand the airport allowing a Fixed Base Operator to provide services, expand hangar /tie down space, and consider the use of multi-year leases.



*Available Resources*

**Local Highway Technical Assistance Council**

Highway/Bike paths/lanes/sidewalks: Local Highway Technical Assistance Council (LHTAC)  
Idaho Department of Transportation. 208-344-0565

Bicycle/pedestrian issues: Mark McNeese, Bike/Ped Coordinator, ITD, 208-334-4432

Surface Transportation Program (local rural): Jerry Flatz, LHTAC, 208-344-0565, email  
jflatz@lhtac.org

Local Investment Programs, Jim Zier, LHTAC, 208-344-0565, email: jzier@lhtac.org

**Idaho Transportation Department**

Scenic Byways: Garry Young, ITD, 208-334-8214, email: garry.young@itd.idaho.gov

Public Transportation: Janet Weaver, ITD, 208-334-8828, email: janet.weaver@itd.idaho.gov

Safe routes to Schools: Jo O'Connor, 208-334-4475, ITD, email: jo.o'connor@itd.idaho.gov

Congestion Mitigation Air Quality, Transportation Enhancement funding: Phil Choate, ITD, 208-334-8489; email: phil.choate@itd.idaho.gov

Highway safety: Brent Jennings, ITD, 208-334-8557, email: brent.jennings@itd.idaho.gov

**Idaho Department of Lands**

City landscape: Dave Stephenson, Idaho Department of Lands, 208-666-8621, email:  
dstephenson@idl.idaho.gov

*Downtown revitalization Resources*

**Panhandle Area Council**

Department of Commerce and Labor, Community Development Block Grants. Grant writer:  
Panhandle Area Council, Nancy Mabile, 11100 Airport Drive, Hayden, ID 83935; 208-772-0854

**USDA Rural Development**

Community Facilities loans/grants, Jeff Beeman, 7830 Meadowlark Way, Ste C3, Coeur  
d'Alene, ID 83815, 208-762-4939, ext 118.

Rural Business Enterprise Grants, Margaret Hair, 7830 Meadowlark Way, Ste.C3, Coeur  
d'Alene, ID 83815, 208-762-4939, ext 117

*Airport Facilities Resources*

**Idaho Transportation Department**

Division of Aeronautics, Airport Planning and Development Manager, Bill Statham, 208-334-8784 or  
bill.stathoam@itd.idaho.gov.

Coeur d'Alene, Airport manager, Greg Delavan, 208-772-7838

Nampa Airport manager, Colleen Hartnett, 208-486-5825

## Land Use Planning

The Land Use Planning Focus Group consisted of Jon Norstog, Planning Director, Shoshone-Bannock Tribes; Victoria Hahn, Community Reinvestment Bank Officer, Panhandle State Bank; Barbara Leachman, Housing Director, Community Action Partnership; and Carla Olson, Community Planner, Ada County Development Services.

### General Community Comments and Concerns

The Land Use Planning Team focused not only on the general issues of zoning, regulation and the provision of sites and services to meet community needs, but also on some of the larger issues facing the St. Maries community. Planning at its best is an expression of the values, life, hopes, dreams and aspirations of the community that carries it out. Communities that plan successfully are usually those that make it a community-wide effort and that take the time to reach consensus.

We listened to the same people as the other teams, but we listened as planners, with an ear to turning what we heard into the substance of a community plan. What we heard was a mix of pride, concern, ideas, needs and hope for the future. What stands out first is love of community and a sense that St. Maries is a special place. People want to progress and grow, but also stay the same. “Keep St. Maries and the surrounding area unspoiled.” “We have a rare quality of life here and we don’t want to lose it.”

The big questions in planning are these: “Who are we? Where are we going? How do we get there?” When we were visiting the Arts Council gallery, one of us commented on the way the Council was reaching out and helping school children, hosting community events, and taking a generous and inclusive view of what “art” is, and who is an artist. A woman answered: “That’s who we are.” If you know who you are the rest of it will come.

“We welcome new houses but we don’t want spec homes. “Whatever we do it should not be about rich people building big summer homes. Our efforts need to be concentrated on the people who already live and work here.” We don’t want McDonalds... we want locally-owned businesses that reflect local character.” “We do not want ‘cookie cutter’ subdivisions.” “We don’t want St. Maries to overdevelop or to develop too fast.” “We don’t want large corporations moving in and platting and developing huge summer homes.



The needs and desires people expressed were all within reach. Typical were these: good housing that young working people could afford; improvements to the downtown area, especially streets and circulation; improved shopping and entertainment opportunities; diversification of the local economy; a better physical and visual connection between the town and the river; tourism.

In terms of planning, one issue that stood out most was housing in all its aspects: availability, affordability, the condition of housing stock, the appearance of residential neighborhoods, the shortage of rental houses, and the lack of affordable sites for new housing. There are other issues as well. One big issue that has not really come to the forefront with community residents is the graying of Saint Maries. The elected officials call themselves the “Class of 1954.” Who is coming up to replace them? The workforce is weighted toward boomer-generation workers with a shortage of younger men and women to take their places as they retire. Yes, there is a shortage of young workers. There are fewer children in town than in years before, and the trend shows no sign of change.

We have developed four action areas for planning below. Rather than list “things to do” we have tried to incorporate specific suggestions into a recommended process.

### Issue 1: Change is Here

Throughout our visit we heard again and again community members’ fears of change. This is a natural reaction, especially in view of the wave of change that has washed over the lake communities of Coeur d’Alene and Sandpoint.

#### *Observations*

The signs of change are all over. New housing is going up here and there, developers are making their approaches, and new employment opportunities are creating the need for workforce housing. Even though the timber industry looks solid for many years, new ways of making a living are becoming possible in St. Maries. St. Maries cannot by itself deal with the issues facing the community. Without city-county coordination, development that should be located within the city will locate in the unincorporated areas outside city limits. Planning for St. Maries’ future will require a joint city-county vision and continued cooperation. City and County already have the necessary good working relationship – a great asset on which to build!

#### *Recommendations*

- 1) A community-based plan to accommodate and guide change

The emphasis here is on community. St. Maries should take advantage of its assets as a small town where people value their relations with each other. Talk to each other - start that long conversation that is necessary. If the process starts to bog down or lose direction, you might benefit from engaging the services of a planner/facilitator.

- 2) Work together as family, neighborhood and community; City, County and Coeur d’Alene Tribe should cooperate.

You have said that family is important to you. Your neighborhoods are where St. Maries’ families meet, visit, talk, work, play together, where they help each other and watch out for each other’s children. The neighborhood level is a good place to start talking about the direction your community plan will take, and what will be in it.

We strongly encourage you to work with youth. People too young to vote can participate in planning on an equal footing with adults. They should be included and their views given serious weight, because they are going to be living with the outcome of the city’s new plans for most of their lives. More importantly, by involving young people in an important civic activity like planning, you will be helping develop the new leaders who will replace the “Class of 1954” when their time comes. One approach to engaging youth in this process is by making use of their technological expertise. Ask a High School class to make maps of the community using Geographic Information System (GIS) technology. University of Idaho Extension can help by training the youth.

The Coeur d’Alene Tribe has been reaching out to its non-Indian neighbors. Tribal development has caused some problems for St. Maries, but the Tribe can also help, for instance by providing worker housing closer to Worley.

- 3) Retain and express community values

Every plan starts as a story. Your plan should be based on the story of who you are, what you value, and how you feel those values shape the future of your community.



#### 4) Leadership should come from the community

The process of developing a plan that represents the community - that satisfies community needs in ways consistent with community values - will bring out the leadership abilities of some people. Some people are “naturals” while others grow when faced with a challenge. St. Maries is a small town with a lot of work that needs to be done. The more grass-roots leadership you can develop and empower, the better off the whole community will be.

#### 5) Take a strategic approach

Much of the concern expressed during our visit was over the possible outcome of growth and development. This is a valid concern. A proactive, strategic approach to development leaves the community in a better position to control its outcome. Although a zoning map and updated codes are essential, the community needs more actual planning. The needs, hopes, desires and dreams of community members should be addressed in an integrated, systematic way.

From a fairly new small business owner. “It was difficult to start a new business here. The City requirements were easy but we felt invisible... We could do more to welcome new businesses and help with new start-ups.” Small businesses can be supported not only with an increased supply of storefronts, but also with high-speed Internet services, downtown beautification improved transportation and parking and labor force training.



It should be noted that any activity that requires a work force generates a need for workforce housing. Think agriculture, timber, small downtown business, education or children. Think luxury second home construction, maintenance and protection. The people providing and benefiting from those activities need stability. When all the people that make a community function have access to safe, stable and affordable housing, the entire community can thrive.

Employers benefit through more stable and productive employees and lower recruitment and retention

costs. The community benefits from emergency first responders who live within the community. The local economy benefits from better school attendance, higher productivity and lower demands on social services from households that are constantly stressed. Support for workforce housing should be shared equally by all those who benefit from it. It is a perpetual community asset, one that returns approximately \$8 for every \$1 investment over 15 years.

Consider inclusionary zoning for new subdivisions or workforce housing linkage fees for all new commercial and residential development. Revenue can be used by the city to create affordability through a community land trust model, or to create a revolving second mortgage loan fund for high priority workforce, such as police, fire or EMT professionals, teachers, nurses, or essential government workers. Those who leave must repay all or part of the loan.

Beyond workforce housing is the need for a housing continuum. Seniors or persons with disabilities (and their families) benefit by knowing they can always remain in and contribute to their community.

St. Maries can be a place where families stay together, but only through thoughtful planning for current and future housing needs. Supporting affordable housing is an investment in yourselves, your neighborhoods and your community.

#### *Resources*

##### **University of Idaho, County Extension**

Valdasue Steele, the Benewah County Extension Educator, and Timothy Ewers, a 4-H youth specialist who provides programs and training related to science and technology (e.g., GIS). Valdasue can be reached at 245-2422 or [vsteele@uidaho.edu](mailto:vsteele@uidaho.edu) and Tim at 885-4080. His email address is [tewers@uidaho.edu](mailto:tewers@uidaho.edu).

##### **University of Idaho, Building Sustainable Communities Program**

Starting in 2007, the University of Idaho, Building Sustainable Communities Program will be conducting three community projects per year. These projects will focus on planning issues and will bring faculty and student teams off campus to work with community groups around the state. Contact Tammi Laninga at 885-7779 or [laninga@uidaho.edu](mailto:laninga@uidaho.edu) or Valdasue Steele for more information.

##### **City of Emmett and Gem County**

The City of Emmett and Gem County have been developing a city-county comprehensive plan with the help of the local Gem Team. The team, which includes representatives from every service, advocacy and government organization in the county, divided into subcommittees to work on parts of the plan. If you want to know how one group created and managed a community conversation about growth and development, contact the Gem Economic Development Association (GEDA) president and Community Review steering committee member, Mike Williams, 208-365-5565, [mjdmwms@att.net](mailto:mjdmwms@att.net). For information about GEM Communities contact Hank Ebert, Idaho Commerce and Labor, 334-2650 ext 2141, [hank\\_ebert@business.idaho.gov](mailto:hank_ebert@business.idaho.gov).



St. Maries, Idaho, showing proposed riverfront development area

Shoshone-Bannock Tribal Planning Department: October, 2006



## **Issue 2: Taking Charge of Change**

St. Maries has both barriers to overcome and untapped resources it can use to take control of the changes that are coming.

### *Observations*

The community and its members—at least the ones we talked to—have a clear idea of their needs, problems and issues. They also are on the same page when it comes to the big questions: who are we, what is happening, where did we come from, where are we going? This clarity and sense of a common direction are not often met in a community. St. Maries seems to be at a place that many communities reach only after a long struggle.



At the same time, St. Maries needs the tools to take control of development and change. The city has a zoning map and a zoning ordinance that do not reflect the ways community members use their homes and businesses, and that are woefully out of date. As a result the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council have to continually make judgment calls on permitting decisions, a process that always leaves somebody feeling unsatisfied.

### *Recommendations*

- 1) St. Maries needs a community-based comprehensive plan.

By going through a community planning process, the community can articulate its goals, strategies and directions, and can tie them in with city regulations and permitting process. One way to do this is by working first at the neighborhood level. Perhaps the City can secure the services of a planner/facilitator, either a consultant or through the University.

Ideally, the City's comprehensive plan should address the unincorporated areas nearby. If the City and County coordinate plans, it is less likely that the City will be impacted by incompatible development up to the city line.

Some professional assistance helps when it comes to translating the community's needs, hopes and desires for facilities, commercial locations, housing, parks, infrastructure and development into the text of a plan and accompanying regulations.

- 2) Revise the zoning code to meet community needs

Community members and local business often use their homes and businesses in ways that are not covered by the City's zoning code. For instance, there are retail businesses that include what are clearly light industrial use. The City's zoning regulations (the code) can be written to incorporate rules the community agrees on, maintaining order and making life easier for everyone. Some things the community may wish to look at:

### **Mixed-Use Zones**

We found instances of commercial establishments that routinely carried out activities that would usually be classified as industrial. A workable zoning code is one that would permit and regulate



this type of use. There are single-family homes and multi-unit apartments in the areas zoned commercial. One way to accommodate less intense uses in any zone is through “cumulative” or “pyramid” type zoning regulations.

### **Home Occupations**

We found signs everywhere of home businesses or business use of the home. An example of the type of use that should be addressed specifically in the City’s code is parking log trucks in front of the owner’s home. The Internet has made it possible for many types of business to operate from a home or garage. These may involve pickups and deliveries by shipping companies, or may involve vehicle traffic and parking conflicts during working hours. Every community, and in fact every neighborhood, will have different preferences regarding home businesses such as child day care, bookkeeping and tax preparation, gunsmithing, and so on.

### **“Accessory” Apartments**

Building an accessory house or apartment is a common way for families to provide housing for grown children, accommodate their parents, or generate extra rental income. Permitting accessory housing is a way communities can increase their housing stock without having to set up a housing program.

### **Pool Resources**

The City and the County could save on the costs of planning and development services by sharing staff among two or more jurisdictions. The Coeur d’Alene Tribe may be willing to provide technical assistance as well, or to participate in a three-party arrangement.



### **Organize for Neighborhood-Based Planning and Compliance**

A little bit of recognition and support from the City, plus seeing their views incorporated in plans and decisions can demonstrate to families the benefits of working with their neighbors. A full-time, professional planner could be the City’s contact person with the neighborhoods. Given the range of views on problem issues such as dead cars, home occupations, dogs and cats, maintenance standards etc., the City may find it worthwhile to work through neighborhoods on nuisance and compliance issues.

### *Resources*

#### **Association of Idaho Cities**

Ken Harward, Executive Director, 3100 S. Vista Ave, Suite 310, Boise, ID 83705, 208-344-8594, Email: [kharward@idahocities.org](mailto:kharward@idahocities.org), Website: [www.idahocities.org](http://www.idahocities.org)

The AIC provides training, technical assistance and advocacy services for city governments. Communities needing help with professional training, tax increment financing, legislation, environmental issues, telecommunications, city planning or other municipal management and finance issues should contact the AIC. They also provide information on state, federal and private energy conservation programs.

#### **University of Idaho-Department of Landscape Architecture**

Steve Drown, Chairman, PO Box 442481, Moscow, ID 83844-2481, 208 885-7448, Fax: (208) 885-9428, Email: [larch@uidaho.edu](mailto:larch@uidaho.edu), Website: [www.aa.uidaho.edu](http://www.aa.uidaho.edu)



Student and professors in the College of Art and Architecture are occasional available to consult on projects involving main streets, revitalization, historic preservation, and community design and planning.

### **American Institute for City Planning: AICP Community Assistance Program**

APA and AICP Contacts: American Planning Association, 122 S. Michigan Ave., Suite 1600

Chicago, IL 60603, Phone: 312-431-9100, Fax: 312-431-9985, Website: [www.planning.org](http://www.planning.org)

This is kind of a long shot, but nice if you can get it. CAP addresses social equity in planning through two methods: the Community Planning Workshop and the Planning Assistance Team. In each method, AICP invites its member planners from across the country to advance sound planning practices in communities typically lacking sufficient resources. Such communities are further identified as possessing a planning challenge that would especially benefit from an impartial team of volunteer professional planners whose expertise would afford new insight.

### **Western Planning Association**

Western Planning Association has a listserve in which a member may define a specific planning problem and have a variety of professional and citizen planners respond with suggestions. If a community group involved in planning needs ideas, this can be a quick source of technical assistance, <http://mail.indra.com/mailman/listinfo/westplan>

### **Issue 3: Do it Now!**

It is important for the community to start work right away. We feel there are some immediate needs to be addressed and immediate opportunities to be seized.

#### *Observations*

The community is energized enough to bring in the Community Review team. There seemed to be a sense of direction already, and an appreciation of community needs. This is a good time to start work.

#### *Recommendations*

- 1) Start working on housing right now. Some options include:
  - There are a few large, undeveloped city lots that could be replatted and developed at a higher density.
  - The County owns 17 lots within the City, some of which could be developed.
  - Since some housing demand is being driven by Coeur d'Alene Tribal workforce growth, it is worth exploring new housing development with the Tribe.
  - Take a look at "accessory housing" (typically, a "mother-in-law house" built by a homeowner on his or her house lot.), perhaps on a neighborhood-by-neighborhood basis.
  - Select areas to rezone for higher density housing such as townhouses or apartments
  - Work with the County to designate workforce housing areas
  - Work with Coeur d'Alene Tribe to provide more workforce housing near Worley for tribal and gaming employees
  - Develop ordinances that encourage and reward developers who provide housing affordability as a component of their projects. These can take the form of inclusionary zoning, density bonuses, linkage fees, or fast-tracking options for housing projects that are affordable and well-designed and built. Remember that St. Maries and its current residents should benefit from any future development. Every new home built or subdivision approved

should represent a net gain, not a net drain, for your local community and economy. The consequences will be obvious for a long time.

2) Consolidate a few large commercial sites within a well-defined commercial zone.

Community members identified the need for a hotel and some large stores. Business people felt there was a need for more and better small business sites. At this time the City's commercial area is fairly well defined. Through a timely and thoughtful effort the community could improve the business climate and reap the benefits of improved services and a growing local economy.



3) Begin work on riverfront development

Community members expressed a need to diversify the local economy and bring in compatible tourism development. The Planning Team agrees with the concept. A likely spot is the old Carney poleyard, part of which is city-owned already. This site includes a little over 15 acres with a long river frontage.

4) Encourage infilling of vacant residential lots within city limits with new housing.

There are many single-family homes now sitting on multiple lots. Those lots could accommodate additional housing without the need for expensive service expansions or outward sprawl. During the Planning Team's visit we learned that many homes were built on multiple lots - three lots was very common, and in some cases ten lots were in the same ownership but only had one house. It should be possible to approve additional dwellings on existing platted lots without having to make any changes in the current plan map or zoning regulations. What may help is some sort of community housing finance mechanism, like the "neighborhood housing services" organizations found in other communities around the state. You may find an existing entity that will partner with St. Maries, eliminating the need to reinvent the wheel and any new bureaucracy.

*Resources*

**Idaho Housing and Finance Association**

Erik Kingston, Housing Resources Coordinator, 565 W. Myrtle P.O. Box 7899, Boise, ID 83707-1899, (208) 331-4882, Fax (208) 331-4802, Website: <http://www.ihfa.org/default.asp>

IHFA is an organization dedicated to affordable rental and homeowner housing in Idaho. Recent activities have included collaborations to assess workforce, senior and other housing need in Idaho communities and to pursue strategies that address those needs. This is in response to a growing

awareness of the relationships among housing affordability and sustain community and economic development. IHFA could be a one-stop shop for St. Maries when the community takes action on its housing issues.

### **Housing Assistance Council**

Surabhi Dabirs, Director of Technical Assistance and Training, 1025 Vermont Ave, N.W., Suite 606 Washington, D.C. 20005, (202) 842-8600, (202) 347-3441, Email: [hac@ruralhome.org](mailto:hac@ruralhome.org) Website: <http://www.ruralhome.org>

The Housing Assistance Council (HAC) has been helping local organizations build affordable homes in rural America since 1971. HAC has gained a national reputation by providing below-market financing, technical assistance, program and policy analysis, research and demonstration projects, training and information services to public, nonprofit organizations nationwide who are concerned about affordable housing for low-income people in rural America

### **Neighborhood Housing Services**

Tom Lay, Director, PO Box 8223, Boise, Idaho 83707, (208) 343-4065, Fax: (208) 343-4963 Email: [info@boisenhs.org](mailto:info@boisenhs.org)

A number of communities statewide have developed local neighborhood housing services corporations, following guidelines established by state Neighborhood Housing Services. These organizations are geared toward enabling home ownership for low and moderate income working families. These organizations deal in affordable public housing. Many have the ability to access federal funds for housing development.

### **Community Action Partnership**

124 New 6th Street, Lewiston, ID 83501  
Phone (208) 746-3351 - Fax (208) 746-5456  
Email: [l.stoddard@acomunityactionpartnership.org](mailto:l.stoddard@acomunityactionpartnership.org)  
Website: [www.acomunityactionpartnership.org](http://www.acomunityactionpartnership.org)

Serving Clearwater, Idaho, Latah, Lewis, Nez Perce, Benewah, Bonner, Boundary, Kootenai and Shoshone Counties.

#### **Housing Counseling and Education:**

Cindy Motern in St. Maries, Renters  
Benewah County  
416 Main St.  
St. Maries, ID 83861  
208.245.9090  
Fax 208.245.3306

Mary Hereck in Couer d'Alene, Renters and Fair Housing  
4942 Industrial Ave. East  
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815  
208.664.8757  
Fax 208.664.8586  
1.888.725.3663

Barbara Leachman in Lewiston, Foreclosure Prevention, Home Buying, Reverse Mortgages, Affordable Housing Development and Advocacy.  
Home Buyer and Financial Education: 8.5 hour Finally Home! class can be presented in St. Maries with enough local interest.  
124 New 6th St.  
Lewiston, ID 83501  
208.746.3351  
Fax 208.746.5456  
1.800.326.4843

#### Issue 4: The Long Haul

St. Maries is a small community facing major economic and social forces, and is a tempting target for big-time developers. It looks tough for the good guys, but knowing where you want to go over the long term and having a strategy to get there can even up the playing field. The big guys are all playing checkers; the little guys have to play chess. A good community plan looks at the long term—25 years or more. If the community can choose its goals and follow through with action, every action will move St. Maries in the direction it has chosen.

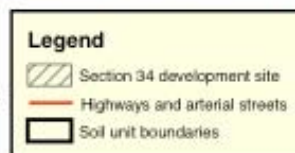
##### *Observations*

People in the community attach much value to the undeveloped "section 34" property south of town. This is a valuable asset, but it is distracting the community from doing the hard work of coming up with a long-term plan. Section 34 by itself it will not "save" St. Maries.





St. Maries, Idaho, showing proposed rsection 34 development area  
Shoshone-Bannock Tribal Planning Department: October, 2006





The last section included recommendations for immediate attention action. This is the second part of the action plan.

### *Recommendations*

#### 1) Grow to the south.

That is where the undeveloped high ground is. The City will eventually annex developed areas to the south to link up to Section 34. This should not be done hastily in a way that leaves harsh feelings. This is one of the things we mean when we recommend expressing your community values in your plans. The city needs to grow and it owns developable land to the south. Intervening property owners are receiving city utilities and services but are reluctant to pay city taxes, as they would if their subdivision were annexed.

Generally Idaho law requires that areas to be annexed to a city be contiguous. There are precedents, however, for non-contiguous annexation for economic development. If the city cannot reach agreement with homeowners in neighborhoods south of town, it may be worthwhile pursuing an exemption from the State Legislature.

#### 2) Bank Section 34

Section 34 is a tremendous asset for St. Maries' future. We recommend a full feasibility study to evaluate options for development and use of the land. The community needs to be involved in making the decision; probably the worst option would be to accept an unsolicited proposal from a developer. In any case, whatever is done with section 34, the value to the City will be greater if it is annexed first. In the meantime, it is generating revenue, as if it were money earning interest in the bank. Our recommendation is to treat it as such.

#### 3) Set clear objectives for workforce housing

The community is in agreement on the need for decent housing for working people in the community. This is a basic need that must be met to support economic growth. The forward-thinking thing to do is set annual or five-year targets (objectives) for new workforce housing, then follow through with action.

#### 4) Develop a capital improvements plan and program

Many community comments involved the need for new facilities: a jail and police station or justice center; a wellness center; a recreation center; a community center. These are all high-dollar projects in a low-dollar community. A capital improvements plan, perhaps jointly with Benewah County, would help the community prioritize and fund some of these needs. The Rural Development Agency (USDA) has 40-year loans on easy terms for small rural communities to build critical facilities and infrastructure.

### *Resources*

#### **Idaho Commerce & Labor, Division of Economic Development**

Community Development Specialist, 700 West State Street, P.O. Box 83720, Boise, ID 83720-0093  
(208) 334-2470, 1-800-842-5858, FAX (208) 334-2631, Email: [info@community.idaho.gov](mailto:info@community.idaho.gov)

Website: <http://community.idaho.gov/>

The Division of Economic Development manages the Idaho Community Block Grant Program. The program offers grants for economic development projects, senior citizen centers, community utilities and facilities, and various types of housing projects. The Division of Economic Development also provides a resource directory for infrastructure improvements called "The Advantage in Infrastructure Financing." The directory is designed to help communities coordinate funding sources for infrastructure projects such as sewer, water, streets, and fire stations. The Advantage directory provides more program detail than this directory and is recommended for infrastructure improvement planning.

**USDA Rural Development**

Northern Idaho Area Office, Morris E. (Mac) Cavasar, Jr., Area Director, 7830 Meadowlark Way, Ste. C3, Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815, 208-762-4939 fax 208-762-9799

E-Mail: [mac.cavasar@id.usda.gov](mailto:mac.cavasar@id.usda.gov)

RDA has a number of grant and loan programs for low and moderate-income housing assistance in rural communities. This agency also has 40-year low-interest loans for essential community service facilities and infrastructure.

**Panhandle Area Council**

Panhandle Area Council, 11100 N. Airport Drive, Hayden, ID 83835, (208) 772-0584, Fax: (208) 772-6196, <http://www.pacni.org/pachome.htm>. PAC is a council of governments providing a range of useful services. The services PAC provides include project planning, grant writing, grant administration, low interest loans to small businesses, government procurement assistance, employment training, census data depository and business counseling.

**Housing Assistance Council**

National Office, 1025 Vermont Ave., N.W., Suite 606, Washington, D.C. 20005, 202-842-8600, [hac@ruralhome.com](mailto:hac@ruralhome.com). PAC is a council of governments providing a range of useful services. The services PAC provides include project planning, grant writing, grant administration, low interest loans to small businesses, government procurement assistance, employment training, census data depository, and business counseling.

**A Guide to Federal Housing and Community Development Programs for Small Towns and Rural Areas**

A useful book for the community. More than 80 programs are listed in this guide, including those administered by the two primary federal housing offices, the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Agriculture Department's Rural Housing Service. The guide also contains other, less well-known housing-related funds from sources such as the Department of Energy and the Environmental Protection Agency.

Each description is a page or two in length and includes a summary of the program's purpose, its eligibility requirements, the terms of the loans or grants available, and additional comments where appropriate. Websites, office addresses, and phone numbers are provided for readers wishing to learn more or obtain application information.

The guide is available online at [www.ruralhome.org/pubs/guides/fedprograms/toc.htm](http://www.ruralhome.org/pubs/guides/fedprograms/toc.htm).

## Part III. Summary, Strategies, and Next Steps

Through the act of applying for a Community Review, the City of St. Maries took a powerful step toward increasing community wealth and vitality and controlling the community's destiny. St. Maries' next steps are crucial and will require comprehensive planning that engages the entire community. The recommendation for community-based planning is a repeated theme throughout this report and therefore needs to be the first order of business prior to initiating new plans and projects. It will serve as a solid foundation for years to come.

Of all the Community Reviews we have conducted, St. Maries had the highest rate of return on the surveys. Doubly impressive was the high turn out for two evening forums. This level of participation is a clear sign that St. Maries citizens want to chart the course for their future. We encourage you to intentionally, wisely, and thoroughly open up the planning process. Reach out to young people, retirees, store clerks, truck drivers, and medical professionals. A well-organized process for community engagement and participation is essential if you are serious about charting a course for all of your residents.

### Summary

St. Maries is changing and will continue to change. It is growing. Agriculture, logging and other natural resources are not driving the economy in the way they once did. While local support for this change and growth is mixed, St. Maries is bound by a sense of community spirit and pride in its heritage. These shared sentiments can bring the community of St. Maries together as it seeks to maintain and improve infrastructure, use the land wisely and with foresight, and retain and attract business and plan for the future.

### Caution: Change Ahead

No one disputes that St. Maries will grow and change, perhaps significantly, over the next few years. Change brings new challenges and possibilities. While not always easy, planning for change and meeting challenges head-on allows a community to set its own destiny. Some of the challenges observed by the visiting team include:

- The need for improved communication among city, county, and other leaders, and between leaders and citizens.
- The need to explore new revenue generating options to finance road and sidewalk improvements.
- The need to recruit and keep well-paying jobs in St. Maries (economic development).
- The need for long-term strategic planning on all levels.
- The need to maintain, develop, and sustain partnerships.
- The need to include **all** members of the community in community life and decisions.

These "challenges" are good challenges. They reveal that St. Maries is a quality place to live and is looking toward the future. For instance, the need to recruit and keep jobs wouldn't be as much of an issue if there weren't youth who wanted to live in St. Maries as adults, providing they can find work. The need to broaden the participation of all members of the community wouldn't be an issue if St. Maries did not have diverse groups within the community.

These issues are broad and weave themselves throughout this document; some relate specifically to one or more of St. Maries three focus areas (Economic Development, Infrastructure, and Land Use), while others do not.

## **Strategies**

Below is a brief outline of the strategies highlighted in this report that can help St. Maries plan for, and respond to, the broad challenges listed above. Strategies specific to St. Maries three focus areas are outlined in detail in *Part II: Team Reports*; however, many of the strategies listed below mirror or compliment those of the specific focus areas.

### **Communication**

The visiting team and many St. Maries residents recognize the need for effective communication. With change escalating at such a dramatic rate, more deliberate and intentional communication strategies must be employed in order for St. Maries to get ahead of the change curve. The communication network that needs the most improvement is among city, county, tribal leadership, business, government entities and citizens.

As pointed out in the team reports, the City of St. Maries needs its own website. It is time. Although, the St. Maries Chamber of Commerce is a good resource for information, the application needs to be broader. Branding is particularly important in supporting and establishing the identity St. Maries wants to convey to those living in and beyond the city limits.

The number of citizens who attended the community meetings is a terrific testament to the communication infrastructure in place. Organizers used a variety of means to reach out to the community. In turn, the community responded well to an opportunity to be involved in a long-range planning process the Community Review provides.

This, however, is only part of the equation. Continued and improved relations and communication among city, county, and other leaders (faith and tribal communities, chamber of commerce, school board, other cities, etc.) is a must. These organizations and their leaders must work in concert to leverage resources and provide consistent policies. A good place to start is for the city to invite other leaders (e.g., multi-denominational churches, county commissioners, school board members) to appoint members to serve as liaisons with the city council and for the city to offer to do the same with other organizations. These liaisons would attend meetings and provide input related to the organization they represent. We also strongly encourage a Mayor's Youth Advisory Council be formed as a means to mentor St. Maries future community leaders.

A third aspect of the communication issue is that of communicating to, and serving the needs of, visitors and new residents. Simply providing quality customer service at local businesses, and cultivating knowledgeable front-line employees, goes a long way to improve relations and communication. A friendly smile, a warm welcome to a stranger, an offer to help, and the knowledge to be able to do so will bring people back to St. Maries. Providing customer service skill training to employees, not only teaches them skills, but also teaches them about local resources. It is an easy and yet valuable investment.

### **Community Identity**

St. Maries is a community with a rich history and there is strong evidence that you are beginning to tell the story. Keep telling it. The natural resources alone are enough to draw visitors, but when you add all the elements of St. Maries, people will want to experience what you have to offer. There are only a few things that stand in the way of realizing great success in this area; one of them is community identity.

A well thought-out identity can encompass all of those facets of St. Maries' personality. We encourage you to keep soliciting input from citizens as you seek to strengthen your sense of identity. Follow the process you used for the Logger's Memorial and build upon the success of community participation. Consider forming a community-based council or group that is assigned to various projects and then recruit citizens, community leaders, businesspeople, the agricultural community, the faith community, and other stakeholders to serve on this council. Conduct research on branding and its importance in guiding the development of your community. Ultimately, the brand/identity should articulate what St Maries is, what it has to offer, and what it expects to become. Once your identity is established, it can be used as a basis for marketing.

### **Economic Development**

As with most small communities, economic development and jobs are closely tied to other aspects of community development. The visiting team continually heard comments from citizens and youth that long-term, living-wage jobs were a key to St. Maries' survival. We agree. Many youth, in particular, stated that they would like to stay in, or return to, St. Maries to live and raise a family, but cannot without a good paying job. The fact that youth have the desire to grow old in St. Maries says a lot about the community: It is up to that community to recruit employers that allow youth to stay or return. Tourism and recreation development, downtown revitalization, and the improvement or development of many community amenities can all play an important role in supporting ongoing and future economic development efforts.

### **Long-term Strategic Planning**

St. Maries has invested years of planning to make St. Maries what it is today. To stay ahead of the change curve, it is essential to make short- and long-term strategic planning a number one priority. Strategic planning, on all levels— regional, county, city, district—will allow St. Maries to control its growth and its destiny. It is imperative that strategic planners from different agencies work together to create plans that complement each other and provide for consistent treatment of growth issues. Old turf issues need to be resolved and earnest collaboration must begin. We recommend that different agencies pull their resources together to hire a facilitator, if doing so will increase the success of your planning. In the long run, it is worth it.

### **Partnerships**

Partnerships leverage resources; they allow for more or higher quality goods and services than can be accomplished alone; they build alliances and they broaden positive impact. Build momentum upon the success collaboration generates in order to create new partnerships that will ignite new and exciting initiatives. Establish partnerships to market the identity of St. Maries. Work with Benewah County to collaboratively market the area. Encourage the St. Maries Chamber of Commerce and the Gem Community team to increase economic development efforts.

### **Inclusiveness**

Many “outsiders” looking in see most rural Idaho communities as homogenous: they assume everyone looks the same, thinks the same, is the same. This is not the case. St. Maries is home to a diverse group of individuals: Farmers, loggers, businesspeople, students, retirees; Mormons, Catholics, Protestants, Atheist; young, old, middle-aged; Caucasian, Hispanic, Native American; long-term residents and newcomers; those who look forward to growth and those who want to hold on to what St. Maries “used to be.” *Like most people, St. Maries residents don't mind change; they just don't want to be changed.*

St. Maries residents are its backbone. However, as is the case in many locations, a few individuals end up doing much of the community work. This can not only cause the “burn-out” of those volunteers, but also limits the community vision to that of those few who are willing to do the work. St. Maries should strive to include all members of the community in its efforts.



Two “groups” of St. Maries’ citizens appear to be especially needed and available for contribution: Youth and newcomers. Make a pro-active effort to include these groups in community decisions and programs. Youth are the adults of tomorrow; including them now not only allows them to have a say in what their community will become, but also provides them with the tools necessary to lead the community when their time comes.

Several of the people who attended the town hall meetings sponsored by the review team were “newcomers.” Yet, these individuals demonstrated a commitment to their new community by showing up to learn and contribute. They see St. Maries from a different perspective. They expressed a willingness to volunteer. Newcomers often bring fresh ideas and new perspectives. Remain open. Tap into these individuals; welcome them, and their energy and new ideas, to the community. Put them to work. The real threat is not that newcomers are “having too much influence” in St. Maries future, but that there is not a comprehensive, well-defined process for collecting ideas and moving forward with initiatives. Determine what your process for community engagement and participation will be and establish it.

The Community Review offers many, many recommendations, ideas, and resources. It is now St. Maries job to sift through the ideas and recommendations generated through the Community Review process. Weigh their costs and benefits, and decide how to proceed.

The visiting team does not expect you to follow-through with every suggestion and idea. To attempt to do so would be impossible. The key to success is to work methodically—plan, prioritize, evaluate, and, if necessary, re-group. Start with a plan. Decide on community priorities, then develop a plan of how to reach them, complete with goals and objectives. Make sure your objectives are timely and measurable and support your goals. Continually refer to your objectives and “check” them off as they are completed. Remember, keep the process open.



### Start With a Plan

The plan does not have to be a formal document, but does need to be well thought out and endorsed by your key participants. Use the plan to guide decisions on specific actions, such as recommendations from this report.

### Establish Priorities and Create a Timeline

Once you have developed a plan and decided which recommendations or other actions you plan to pursue, it is time to prioritize them and develop a timeline for their implementation. Not everything can, or

should, be done immediately. When prioritizing and developing your timeline, ask these questions:

- **Have we done our planning first?** With few exceptions, nothing should be done until a plan is in place.
- **Does this fit into the big picture?** Does the project fit into the plan? No matter how easy, fun, or inexpensive a project is, or how much community support it has, consider first whether it will help achieve goals and objectives. A project that does not meet plan goals can be useless, create a inconsistent community image, or draw resources from other projects.

- **How much will it cost? Can we afford it?** Small, inexpensive changes can make a big impact—a lot of money is not always necessary to achieve goals. However, avoid doing projects just because they are inexpensive and don't avoid projects just because they are expensive. If something will help you meet your goals, it is worth pursuing. For expensive projects, consider applying for grants or building partnerships to leverage resources.
- **How long will it take to implement?** Quick changes can often make a big impact. Just be sure they fit into larger program goals.
- **How quickly will we see the benefits?** Quick fixes can be good, especially in the short term, but longer-term fixes also often take a longer time to realize. Don't let a slower return on investment deter you from undertaking a worthwhile project. When feasible, consider starting these types of projects first so they can be slowly “doing their thing” while you undertake other projects.
- **Does something else have to happen before we can do this?** Consider the overall timeline. Does a plan need to be in place before something can happen (always a good idea)? Do voters need to be involved? Do you need to get permission? Jumping the gun can slow things down in the long run.
- **Does this have to happen before we can do something else?** If something else is waiting on the outcome of your project, consider this in your time frame. A project that may not seem important may need to take priority to allow something else to happen.
- **Are there external time-frames we need to fit into?** When are grant requests due? If partnering, what are the other partners time-frames? You may need to begin a planning or grant application process long before you are ready to do the work.

#### Check Progress and Stay on Track

Plans are great tools, but once developed and the “real” work begins, they are often relegated to collecting dust on shelves. Use your plans and the plan(s) you put together as a result of these) as roadmaps. Refer to them often. Continually compare projects against your goals and objectives and ask:

- Are we still working toward our goals and objectives?
- If not, do we need to refocus our energies or do we need to reconsider our goals?
- Are we using resources toward projects that don't lead us toward our goals and objectives?
- If so, how can we change that?
- Which objectives have we met?
- Is meeting our objectives getting us closer to our goals?
- Which objectives have we not met? Why?
- Do we need new or additional objectives to meet our goals?

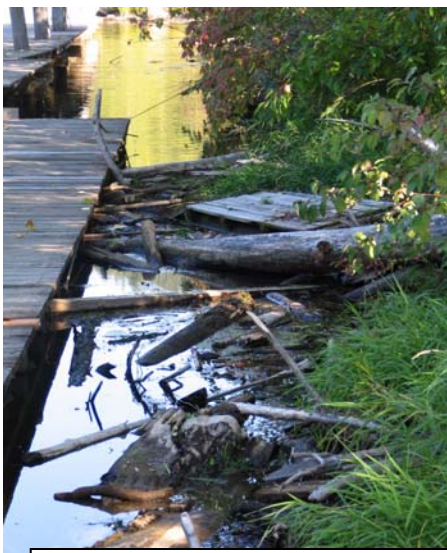
## Parting Shots

The following photographs are “parting shots” for generating ideas for projects that community members might get behind in the short-term. With a little creativity and vision, the result could set the momentum for larger projects.



# *The St. Joseph River*

*One of St. Maries' Crown Jewels Waiting to be Restored*





# Historic Treasures

*Think Outside the Boxcar!*





# Safe Places for Young People

*Making Gathering Places Healthy Spaces*



## Part IV. Appendices

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Appendix A. Ashton Community Review Application

# **Idaho Community Review Application**

## **A Community Visitation Program**

# Idaho Community Review Application

## A Community Visitation Program

Offered in Partnership by the  
Association of Idaho Cities, Idaho Rural Partnership,  
Idaho Department of Commerce, Idaho Housing & Finance Association, Boise State University, & U.S. Department of  
Housing & Urban Development

Please submit the answers to the following questions to the Association of Idaho Cities, 3314 Grace Street, Boise, ID, 83703. Cities with populations under 10,000 are eligible to apply.

The community review program is an excellent in-kind value for its cost. Idaho Cities such as Heyburn, Jerome, Hayden, Kooskia, Priest River, Weiser, and Buhl have conducted successful community reviews for under \$2,500. Estimated costs for a community review through a private consulting firm, including salary, travel, lodging, site visit, data collection, and report fees, is well over \$20,000 for equivalent expertise from 15-18 community development professionals.

Your community must agree to accept the following responsibilities to ensure the success of the review:

- Arrange for large and small group meeting sites throughout the review with community leaders and citizens
- Appoint a home team leader for each of the three focus areas you identify who is willing to work with the visiting team leaders to plan and coordinate the community review
- Arrange community tours and meeting agendas in the three focus areas you identify
- Pay for group transportation during the community tours and all team meals (many communities have partnered with school districts and civic groups to share transportation and meal costs)
- Make lodging reservations for the visiting team
- Publicize the community review to maximize community participation
- Assist with survey data collection prior to the community review
- Provide one or two individuals during the review to assist with data entry
- Designate at least two community members to facilitate the follow-up process

Community: St. Maries

Main Contact Person: Kim Schwanz

Address/City/State/Zip: PO Box 338

Phone, Fax, Email: 208-245-2239, 208-245-3477, timberplus@smgazette.com

Names/phone numbers/Email addresses of the three Focus Area Team Leaders:

Mayor Robert Allen 208-245-2577

Kim Schwanz 208-245-2239

Lori Yearout 208-245-3563

- 3) Circle, or write in, the three focus areas that your community would like to emphasize. Focus areas might include some combination of the following:

**\*Local Economic Development**

**\*Housing**

**\*Infrastructure**

Community Design & Identity

**\*Land Use Planning**

Education

Health Care

Arts, Historic, and Recreation Resources

Seniors and Youth

Civic Life and Community Involvement

Other Focus Area(s): \_\_\_\_\_

In the Focus Areas identified, what specific issues does your community want to address?

1.) *With respects to Economic Development we are looking for help in business recruitment, retention and expansion.*

2.) *Housing is a critical need here as more people look outside the Coeur d' Alene area for more reasonable housing options and also we need an increase in our work force for future growth. B. We are seeing a steady increase from early retirees coming into our area for relocation and also secondary homes. To meet there needs additional housing in the moderate to high end home will also be required.*

3.) *St. Maries is located at the confluence of the St. Maries and the St. Joe Rivers with a large portion of the available land for expansion located in the flood plain. Critical care is needed to evaluate the local available property to be used for a maximum benefit.*

What is the best possible outcome resulting from a community review in your town?

*Providing our local community leaders and the community as a whole with information to allow St. Maries and the surrounding area to grow cohesively with a common plan that is attainable.*

What strategic planning, business development, enhancement, revitalization, clean-up, contracted or consulting efforts have occurred in your community in the last one to three years? (attach additional sheets, documentation, brochures, or report summaries as necessary)

*Ordinances have been enacted and are being enforced which have landowners in the city maintain their property with regards to derelict vehicles, unsafe or condemned buildings. St. Maries finished the first phase in our downtown revitalization project in 2003 which redid the infrastructure i.e. (water, sewer, sidewalks and streets) from Fourth Street through Tenth Street. Plans on begging to be develop to continue this through town east to the city limit. St. Maries in the fall of 2004 opened the Loggers Memorial park in downtown St. Maries which lists the names all of the individuals who lost there lives in the timber industry in our surrounding area. This park will continue to grow with plans of placing a memorial statue of a logger, additional information signage and a water feature. This is placed on Idaho Department of Transportation property that was purchased to realign*



*highway 5 which travels through the center of town, this park has turned a weeded lot into a beautiful addition to our downtown.*

What other projects has your community completed in the last one to three years? (attach additional sheets or information as necessary)

The city has remodeled baseball, softball and soccer fields with new sprinkler systems and fencing.

*Has your community completed and implemented a Gem Plan? If so, please describe to what extent and attach a copy of the Gem Plan to this application.*

*Our Gem Community group has redesigned the signage and map boards for the White Pine Scenic byway which travels through St. Maries and is now finishing the signage and associated map boards for a new scenic byway which we secured last year designated the St. Joe River Scenic Byway. One of our goals is to help the city to grow by helping business to expand, supporting new startup businesses, and actively recruiting business to relocate.*

What possible dates do you propose for a community review?

*We would be interested in having this done in the fall of 2006.*

Mayor's Signature: ON FILE WITH IDAHO RURAL PARTNERSHIP AND CITY OF ST. MARIES

## **Appendix B. Visiting Team Biographies**

## Visiting Team Members

The in-kind value of each review varies and is always substantial. It is the equivalent of hiring a professional consulting firm of 15 - 25 experts in land-use planning, economic/community development, tourism, facilitation, infrastructure, communication, and other fields of expertise for two to three days of focused on-site work (14 hour days are typical), plus weeks and months of work before and after the review by a core group of team leaders who plan the review, prepare the report, and follow up with the community. In addition, those experts open themselves to continual follow-up: a community can call any member of its visiting team at any time to seek advice or clarification. Travel and lodging costs are also assumed by the visiting team, as is the cost of preparing and printing the final report.



**Henry Artis** is currently the Director of TechConnect North with an office at the University of Idaho Research Park in Post Falls, Idaho. The Idaho TechConnect network helps people convert innovations in science and technology to new or expanded enterprises with support from the Idaho National Laboratory (INL). He has extensive business start-up experience working with clients from Business Incubator facilities both in Idaho and Washington. He has a

background in fabrication manufacturing, new product development, technology transfer and new business creation.

Henry Artis  
VP- Development  
Idaho TechConnect Inc.  
721 Lochsa St. #10  
Post Falls, ID 83854  
Office: 208-262-2039  
[hank.artis@idahotechconnect.com](mailto:hank.artis@idahotechconnect.com)

**John Austin** is a graduate of the University of Idaho, John Austin has 28 years of experience in financial management and accounting, including four years as Finance Director for Kootenai County and nine years in the same position with the City of Coeur d'Alene.



He has been involved with the Panhandle Area Council since 1991, serving on the Board of Directors (as Treasurer) until joining PAC's staff in 2001. In the last five years, he has written grants totaling nearly \$7 million, including \$4.4 million for infrastructure improvements in Shoshone County, and over \$2 million in transportation grants for Kootenai County. In addition to developing the current fixed route and demand response system in Kootenai County, he assisted the cities of Dover, Sandpoint, Spirit Lake and Riggins with the formation of urban renewal agencies. He also works in a partnership that provides financial and accounting services to local governments in the Coeur d'Alene area.

John Austin  
Financial Planner  
Panhandle Area Council  
11100 N. Airport Dr.  
Hayden, ID 83835  
Office: 208-772-0584 Ext 3020  
[john@pacni.org](mailto:john@pacni.org)



**Mac Cavasar** graduated from Southwest Texas State University in 1975 with a BS. degree in Agriculture. His career with USDA began in 1977 as an agricultural loan office in southeast Colorado. In 1979 he transferred to North Idaho with USDA. Mac has extensive experience in agricultural, residential, and commercial lending in the northern ten counties of Idaho. From 1989 to 2001 his employment with

Mac Cavasar  
Area Director  
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7830 Meadowlark Way, Ste C3  
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815  
mac.cavasar@id.usda.gov  
Office: 208-762-4939 ext 126

USDA/Rural Development focused on community facility and infrastructure financing. At present Mr. Cavasar is the Area Director for Area I directing USDA/Rural Development's community development operations and programs in the three offices located in North Idaho; Grangeville, Lewiston and Coeur d'Alene.

Mr. Cavasar is a graduate of Leadership Agriculture Idaho, serves as Chairman of the City of Coeur d'Alene's Pedestrian/Bike Advisory Committee, member of the Board of Directors for the Centennial Tail Foundation.

**Don Davis, P.E.** is a Staff Engineer with the Idaho Transportation Department, District 1 Project Development Section responsible over the past six years for managing consulting engineering agreements for the development of large highway projects such as



Don Davis, P.E.  
District 1, Project Development  
Idaho Transportation Department  
00 West Prairie Ave.  
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814  
Office: 208-772-8019  
don.davis@itd.idaho.gov

US-95, Copeland, US-2 Dover Bridge Replacement and US-95, Garwood to Sagle. Present assignment is to cover the transportation planning activities for the District. Previous experience in land development engineering and permit processing in Bonner County as an engineering consultant. In the 1980s and 1990s, working for Shohomish County Washington Public Works Department, supervised the land use review group which reviewed all land development proposals for traffic impacts and to determine appropriate impact mitigation as required by county code. In the early 1990s Don participated in the Puget Sound Regional Council's Vision 2020 process where the goal was to establish a comprehensive picture of what the Puget Sound region should look like in 30 years and how to make sure it happened.



**Dale Dixon** is an Idaho native and lives with his wife and two children in Nampa. He was named executive director of Idaho Rural Partnership in January, 2005. The organization operates under a Federal Statute and Governor's Executive Order with a mission to join diverse public and private resources in innovative collaborations to strengthen communities and improve life in rural Idaho.

Dale Dixon  
Executive Director  
Idaho Rural Partnership  
821 West State Street  
Boise, ID 83702  
Office: (208) 334-3131  
Cell: (208) 272-0596  
Fax: (208) 334-2505  
Dale.Dixon@cl.idaho.gov

Dale has 16-years of broadcast news and media communication experience working in radio and for CBS, ABC, & NBC-TV affiliates. He has traveled extensively covering a variety of stories ranging from humanitarian efforts in Romania to refueling B1 Bombers over Canada en-route to Bosnia. He is an Associated Press and Idaho Press Club award winner and was named an Idaho Business Review *2004 Accomplished Under 40* recipient.

**Hank Ebert** has professional training and experience primarily in the fields of economic and community development in state government, working with local and regional economic development organizations and Gem Teams in rural Idaho, on the staff of the Idaho Department of Commerce & Labor's Economic Development Division. His professional employment also includes government relations and communications in state and federal government agencies in Idaho and New Mexico as well as for professional associations based in New York and San Francisco. Avocations include outdoor photography and writing. Hank earned a B.A. in political science from Cook College, Rutgers University in 1979 and an M.P.A. from Boise State University in 2003.



Hank Ebert  
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Idaho Commerce & Labor  
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**Debbie Evans** is a grant writer/administrator for a partnership of the City of Kamiah, Kamiah Chamber of Commerce and Kamiah School District – the project has been recognized by the Association of Idaho Cities as an innovative program. Debbie also works with the Glenwood-Caribel Volunteer Fire District and the project administrator for a living history heritage event that is in its third year. She also owns her own business "A Stitch In Time" where she and her staff reproduce historical clothing. Debbie is

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a graduate of the Horizon's Leadership Program and am one of the founding members of the Upper Clearwater Community Foundation, which was responsible for the current Kamiah Community Action Plan; the first of it's kind for Kamiah. She has worked in public



education, union and labor negotiations, school districts on the financial advisory team, vocational education handling student financial aid and with two different tribes as their grants manager.

**Victoria Hahn** is a Community Reinvestment Act Officer for Panhandle State Bank in Coeur d'Alene. Prior to her employment at PSB, Vicki worked at Panhandle Area Council as a regional manager in economic development for Workforce Development and Affordable Housing. Vicki has worked closely with many private sector employers, Department of Commerce and Labor, HUD, Idaho Housing and Finance, Small Business Administration, Department of Education, Health and Human Services, Social Security, Department of Justice, and numerous non-profits providing strategic planning and capacity building for communities. Vicki graduated from the Academy of Development Training Institute (DTI) of Maryland in 2001. As a CRA Officer, Victoria works with other financial institutions to bring support to communities in Idaho, Washington and Oregon.



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**Margaret Hair** is a Rural Development Specialist for USDA, Rural Development. USDA, Rural Development's mission is to improve the economy and quality of life in rural America. She has worked in the business program for the last three years, helping communities and small businesses identify partnerships to fund projects that create or preserve quality jobs and/or

promote a clean rural environment.

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**Lorie Higgins** is an assistant professor in the Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology Department at the University of Idaho. Lorie's work at the University of Idaho combines extension and research activities. As an Extension Specialist, she assists community organizations serving rural areas with community and resource planning and development, including facilitation skills training, strategic planning and collaborative decision-making. Her research focuses on collaborative decision-making, natural resource policy and participatory approaches to community development research. Lorie also teaches a one-credit course on conflict management.



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**Beth Ineck** is employed by Idaho Commerce and Labor (ICL) in the Economic Development Division. She works extensively with rural economic development programs in the northern five counties of the state. Beth provides technical assistance to the programs and project development support. In addition to her role with the economic development programs, she assists in the development and administration of new ICL programs

as they are funded by the Legislature. Prior to her work with the state, Beth served as the Executive Director for the Washington County Economic Development Commission, working closely with businesses and the municipalities in the County to achieve economic and community development goals.

Beth former work experience includes the J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation in Boise as an Assistant Program Developer, where she worked directly with school districts in south east Idaho on a reading initiative funded by the Foundation. Her educational background includes a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from the University of Tennessee and a Master of Science in Agricultural Economics with a research emphasis in economic development from the University of Idaho.

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**Erik Kingston** IHFA provides funding for affordable housing in Idaho communities. Erik created and manages IHFA's Housing Hotline and the Housing Information and Referral Center. He has coordinated statewide strategic planning and reporting efforts for housing and community development throughout the State of Idaho since 1999. Erik is a board member of the Idaho Task Force on

the Americans with Disabilities Act and Idaho Families with Children from Asia, and was formerly employed by Boise Public Works. Originally from Utah, he previously served as Executive Director of Salt Lake City's Wasatch Community Gardens, with the Utah Arts Council Performing Arts Tour and Folk Arts Program, and the Canyonlands Natural History Association. Erik's diverse background includes driving thirsty cattle through dry country and working in a Central Idaho hardrock mine.



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**Deb Krum** is the founder and president of Capacity By Design, a training and consulting business located in Boise. She specializes in motivational speaking, community and faith-based initiatives, and working with individual communities and organizations in harnessing local capacity to create positive change. She previously worked for the Association of Idaho Cities – *Idaho Values Youth* initiative where she supported communities in establishing asset-based youth

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coalitions. She also worked as the 211 Idaho Director, Mountain States Group, helping to bring 2-1-1 health and human service technology to Idaho. Deb served on the Governor's Coordinating Council for Families and Children for four years. She is a Boise State University graduate, a two-year attendee of Northwest Community Development Institute and a licensed minister through Cole Community Church in Boise.

**Barbara Leachman** is the Housing Director at the Community Action Partnership in Lewiston. Her education includes a Master of Business Education and a Bachelor of Agricultural Economics. Barbara's previous employment includes: USDA-FmHA making agricultural and low-income housing loans, LCSC in the college admissions department, and bookkeeping and sales for Intermountain Inc., a specialty contractor. She has lived in Alaska, Oregon, and Idaho.



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Barbara started CAP's Housing Program in 1992 to respond to the need for additional decent affordable housing in the area. With grant and loan applications, acquisition, and rehab or construction, her program now manages 40 affordable apartments, through USDA-RD, IHFA-HOME, and the HUD 811 programs. Last year, the Housing Counseling and Homebuyer Education program at CAP worked with 516 households to help meet housing goals. New programs being explored are Self Help Housing and Individual Development Accounts.

Barbara speaks to various community groups and classes on topics such as Fair Housing, Renting Rights, Affordable Housing Needs, Developing Affordable Senior Housing, and Homebuyer Education. She has participated on the Board of the Idaho Partners for Homebuyer Education and is currently an officer on the Fair Haven Senior Apartments Board of Directors.



**Delta James** is the Community Development Director for the Idaho Commission on the Arts. She assists community groups and cities throughout the state to build and sustain arts-based community and economic development efforts, such as downtown revitalization through artist live-work spaces, entrepreneurial arts business development, cultural tourism efforts, beautification through public art, establishment and fundraising for

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local arts councils and festivals, cultural asset identification, etc. She is a certified Community and Economic Developer through the Northwest Community Development Institute and has a Masters in rural arts management from Univ. of Oregon. Prior to accepting my current position four years ago, Delta was the Executive Director of an arts council in rural eastern Oregon where she led their \$1.8 million capital campaign to renovate a historic downtown building into a multi-discipline arts center.

**John Martin** served in the United States Air Force for almost 24 years, primarily in Personnel and Human Resource positions. John retired as a Lieutenant Colonel in 1993. Some of his more interesting assignments were tours of duty as a member of the Site Activation Task Force for the development and deployment of the Ground Launched Cruise Missile in Europe; a lobbyist in Washington D.C. for the Air Force; and as faculty and staff member at the Air Force's premier military education institutions, the Air Command and Staff College and the Air War College. John is a former high school American History teacher and prior to his military service he also taught at the civilian college level, most recently for Boise State University. Additionally, he worked in the private sector and for the Idaho Department of Labor. John has a Bachelors Degree in Education and a Masters degree in Management, and post-Masters work in Communication. As one of Senator Craig's Regional Directors, he represents the Senator and provides constituent services for the people of the 5 northern counties of Idaho.



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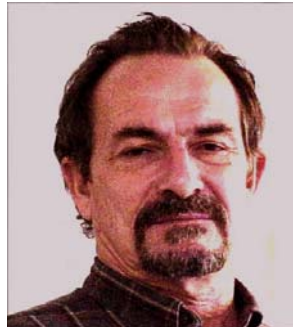
**Carla Olson** has thirty years of professional land use planning experience; 23 of those years in Idaho. She has a degree in Government with a track in Community Planning from Idaho State University, and studied Land Use Law at the University of Idaho Law School. Before that, she grew up in Deary and spent a lot of summer weekends scrambling around the trails and waters of the Saint Joe.

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Ms. Olson is semi-retired, living in Boise, and working for Ada County Development Services. She has one son who is getting married next summer. She is spending her free time getting her yard in shape for the wedding reception.

**Jon Norstog** was born in North Dakota and lived a kind of gypsy life growing up “all over.” He attended the University of Idaho, taking time to serve in the Coast Guard and graduated with a degree in Architecture. He was part of the group of architecture students who sparked the re-development of Moscow’s downtown by renovating the gigantic Moscow Hotel.



Jon Norstog AICP  
Planning Director  
Shoshone-Bannock Tribes  
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After taking graduate degrees in planning at the University of Pennsylvania, Jon and his wife Salisa taught planning and landscape architecture at Chulalongkorn University in Thailand, then returned to the US. Since then Jon has worked as a planning consultant as well as a tribal official with the Navajo Nation and the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, and has authored a good dozen land use, comprehensive, and development plans. He is certified by the American Institute of City Planners and is now the Planning Director for the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes at Fort Hall, Idaho.



**Vince Rinaldi** is currently Executive Director of the Silver Valley Economic Development Corporation and incoming County Commissioner for Shoshone County. Born and raised in The Silver Valley, he received his post-secondary education at the College of Idaho, a.k.a Albertson’s College, and has a diversified business background.

Vince has lived in various regions of Idaho throughout his working career. He and his wife Jill were able to return

to the Silver Valley, the place he has always called “home,” in 2002. Vince and Jill have five children and two dogs.

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**Janet Weaver** As a senior transportation planner for the Idaho Transportation Department, Janet Weaver devotes most of her professional career to working with local communities and elected officials throughout the state for the department’s Division of Public Transportation. She helps rural communities provide local transit services and remain connected despite Idaho’s challenging geography. Her role takes on new dimensions under the federal



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transportation bill approved last year by Congress – funding for rural



transportation in Idaho will increase by about 250 percent over the life of the new bill and will grow from \$1.9 million in 2005 to 4.9 million in 2006.

Committed to extending the reach of public transportation, Weaver works through a variety of forums to reach new audiences such as: the Idaho Rural Partnership, Idaho Department of Commerce and Labor's Rural Partnership Forums, the Governor's Conference on Economic Development and Tourism, and Congressman Mike Simpson's Funder's fairs.

Co-chair of the Taskforce on Bus Safety and Security for the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, Standing Committee on Public Transportation, Weaver has developed expertise in safety and security of public transportation systems. She helped introduce training to Idaho's public transportation providers in 2005 that will help them prepare for natural disasters and security threats. Idaho's training program has been developed into a national model and will be a foundation for training in other states through the National Rural Transit Assistance Program.



**Lora Ulrich** has worked for USDA-Farm Service Agency for 26 years and administers various programs to farmers and ranchers. Lora is a Farm Loan Officer providing her the opportunity to work with farmers and ranchers in rural Idaho. Lora lives in Caldwell with her husband and two children.

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## Appendix C. St. Maries Community Review Survey and Survey Results

# COMMUNITY REVIEW SURVEY— 2005

Listed on the next several pages are 75 community features and resources. Please rate your perception of the quality of these features in your community. *Please be absolutely honest in your answer, as it is important to know exactly how you feel.* If you don't have an opinion about it, simply do not respond to that item.

Item	Community Feature	Quality Rating						
Transportation and Roads								
1.	City Streets and Roads	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Very poor					Very good	
2.	Airport	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Very poor					Very good	
3.	Traffic Conditions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Very poor					Very good	
4.	Parking Downtown	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Very poor					Very good	
5.	Public Transit	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Very poor					Very good	
6.	Bicycle and Pedestrian Access	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Very poor					Very good	
Community Protection								
7.	Police Protection	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Very poor					Very good	
8.	Crime Prevention Programs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Very poor					Very good	
9.	Fire Protection	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Very poor					Very good	
10.	Building Code Enforcement & Inspection	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Very poor					Very good	

<b>Water/Wastewater Resources</b>								
11.	Water Supply	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Very poor						Very good
12.	Water Quality	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Very poor						Very good
13.	Sewage Collection and Disposal	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Very poor						Very good
14.	Flood Control Measures	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Very poor						Very good
<b>Parks &amp; Recreation</b>								
15.	Community Parks and Playgrounds	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Very poor						Very good
16.	Sufficient Planning for Future Recreational Facilities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Very poor						Very good
17.	Recreation for Children 12 and under	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Very poor						Very good
18.	Recreation for Teenagers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Very poor						Very good
19.	Recreation for Adults	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Very poor						Very good
<b>Local Leadership</b>								
20.	Responsiveness of Local Government	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Very poor						Very good
21.	Cooperation Among Local Government and Civic Groups	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Very poor						Very good
22.	Community Involvement in Decision Making	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Very poor						Very good
23.	Cooperation between City and County	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Very poor						Very good
24.	Effective Community Leadership	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Very poor						Very good
25.	Long-Range Planning	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Very poor						Very good
26.	Planning and Zoning of Real Property	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Very poor						Very good
<b>Educational Resources</b>								
27.	Quality of City Library	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Very poor						Very good
28.	Local Arts and Cultural Opportunities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Very poor						Very good
29.	Condition of School Buildings	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Very poor						Very good
30.	Quality of Elementary Education	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Very poor						Very good
31.	Quality of Middle School Education	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Very poor						Very good
32.	Quality of Junior High Education	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Very poor						Very good
33.	Quality of High School Education	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Very poor						Very good

34.	Vocational Education - Job Training Opportunities	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
35.	Higher Education Opportunities	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
<b>Health Resources</b>		
36.	Ambulance Service	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
37.	Availability of Emergency Care	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
38.	Access to Hospital(s)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
39.	Availability of Doctors	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
40.	Availability of Mental Health Care	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
<b>Housing</b>		
41.	Availability of homes to Purchase	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
42.	Condition of homes Available	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
43.	Availability of Rental Housing Options	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
44.	Condition of Rental Housing	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
45.	Availability of Affordable Income Housing Options	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
46.	Condition of Affordable Income Housing Options	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
<b>Community Appearance</b>		
47.	Appearance of Downtown	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
48.	Appearance of Public Buildings	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
49.	Appearance of Neighborhoods	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
50.	Appearance of Gateways into Community	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
<b>Social Climate</b>		
51.	Friendliness of Residents	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
52.	Progressive Community Spirit	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
53.	Welcome Given to Newcomers	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
54.	Acceptance of Minorities	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
55.	Involvement of Churches in Community	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
<b>Jobs and Industry</b>		
56.	Availability of Local Jobs	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good



57.	Quality of Available Local Jobs	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
58.	Variety of Local Industry	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
59.	Business Involvement with Community	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good

<b>Local Goods and Services</b>		
60.	Variety & Quality of Goods in Stores	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
61.	Number of Places to Eat Out	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
62.	Quality of Places to Eat Out	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
63.	Accessibility of Community for People With Disabilities	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
64.	Availability of Day Care for Children	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
65.	Availability of Senior Programs	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
66.	Availability of Drug and Alcohol Treatment Programs	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
67.	Banking and Financial Services	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
68.	Local Newspaper Service	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
69.	Hotel and Motel Accommodations	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
70.	High Speed Internet Access & Quality	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
71.	Entertainment Options	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
72.	Garbage Collection and Disposal	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
<b>Overall Perceptions</b>		
73.	Overall Community Quality	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
74.	City staff response to challenges in Ashton	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good
75.	Usability and helpfulness of city website <a href="http://www.ashtonidaho.com">www.ashtonidaho.com</a>	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very poor Very good

Finally, we would like to know your perceptions—in your own words—about what is great about the City of St. Maries and how you would like to see it improve. Please share your thoughts on these issues with us.

What are the strengths and assets that make the City of St. Maries a special place to work, live, play, and raise a family?

- Small community in remote area with great recreational opportunities. The Rivers!
- This is a good place to raise children but teenagers need more to do in spare time, maybe involve them to take care of the Aqua Park in summer, let them build their own rink in winter.
- Great Location - Hard-working & caring city crew - Volunteers are high-quality & plentiful
- St. Maries is small & we like it rural.
- The people - most are friendly and will go out of their way to help anyone who needs it. -The outdoors - lakes & rivers, & valley. - It is one of the few places left that as long as you treat people like you like to be treated, you can live your life as you wish.
- Proximity to trout fishing streams *i.e.* St. Joe. - Proximity to lake fishing Coeur d'Alene. - Scenic drive to St. Regis via Avery. - Small town atmosphere
- Nonprofits trying to educate the community. Easy access to recreational areas.
- Most people keep their yards really nice. Downtown looks nice. Schools are great and we have good teachers. Local school board seems to be very good and approachable. Lots of sports for kids. Friendly law enforcement. Lots of groups like humane Society, Food bank, Senior Center that help in so many ways.
- Small town atmosphere. No traffic lights...Keep it that way! Tremendous community support for fellow citizens in need. High economic value from fish, wildlife and natural areas. Good community pool and golf course even if not financially profitable. Local bike trails are big for the future economy. \*\*Negative- Main street looks nice, but it is mostly banks and mortgage companies...Need more small retail, specialty and boutique businesses.

Name one or two things that have been effective in improving or enhancing your community over the last few years.

- Main street improvements, loggers memorial
- Community events such as SMArt Festival, Car Show, PBD activities
- The new sidewalks in town. - All the murals painted on the buildings. - The loggers memorial. - Asphalt on the Hwy.
- The redo of Downtown. The new sheriff.
- Up grading water delivery system. *i.e.* replacing old pipes. Redoing main street and sidewalks.
- Law enforcement is more visible in the community trying to make it more safe in our ever changing community.

- Downtown improvements - Keeping parks looking good and safe. Logger Park. A nice feel. Glad Art Gallery is back!! 2) A really good school board finally and staff. 3) Almost everyone helps with community events. Especially for our kids.
- Renaming streets with duplicate names (example - Milltown). 911 call set up & new fire numbers. Redoing the downtown area (murals are great). Putting up signs telling of local history around St. Maries. Beautiful logger Memorial Park. Hopes Haven Animal Shelter. Re-opening of ART gallery - Paving more of the roads . . . but . . . In regards to St. Maries River Rd. We live at the end of the pavement, the dirt starts in front of our home. In years past the roads were oiled which is now illegal. The chemical that is now sprayed on the road to control the dust only lasts about 1 month. So through most of the summer we literally are overwhelmed by the dust - people don't obey the speed limits - it's terrible. Paving would be wonderful.
- Putting a new face in Downtown. Having nice streets. Murals on Downtown store & businesses. Keeping clean streets. Putting up the monument for loggers that died. The fantastic fireworks at Paul Bunyon Days.
- Downtown changed but still needs work on older buildings
- Farmers Market, River frontage improvements
- Downtown improvements - streets, planters & parking. Highways to and from ST. Maries. Beautification of Parks, signs. Dog control - but a comprehensive licensing program is needed to support & pay costs. Condemnation of "junk yard" residential & commercial "eyesores" have helped, but need enforcements
- Kim Schwanz' efforts with Timber plus have contributed to economic development efforts and enhanced tourism. 2) Business services to employers available through Idaho Commerce & Labor in coordination with Federal programs (SBA, SBDC) 3) Educational outreach programs for children coordinated by IDL (Steve Chrala) and Benewah SWCD.
- Our hospital and clinic are beautiful! But room for improvement. Hosp. Dr.'s don't make rounds on weekends. Pay Nurses more. Benefits, etc. Keep quality nurses. Employees billing why go out of town!!??? I don't know Eric Fox but from what I have learned I think he was a scapegoat - Perhaps the Hosp. Board should also be investigated.
- Having a dialogue over community issues and concerns and recognizing that change is inevitable and trying to adapt to economic and lifestyle changes.
- Police cracking down on drug dealers and users.

Do you have any additional comments about the information on the survey or about the City of St. Maries in general? We appreciate any comments or suggestions that you have!

**Thank you for your time and for completing the survey!**

## Results from the St Maries Community Review Survey

568 questionnaires received

(Note that some respondents provided more than one answer to some questions.)

		<b><u>Number</u></b>	<b><u>Pct.</u></b>
<b><u>Infrastructure</u></b>			
Streets and roads are in good condition	Strongly agree	16	3
	Agree	185	33
	Neutral	110	19
	Disagree	170	30
	Strongly disagree	82	14
	No response	6	1
		<hr/> 569	<hr/> 100
The airport and landing strip meet the needs of our community.	Strongly agree	77	14
	Agree	215	38
	Neutral	222	39
	Disagree	15	3
	Strongly disagree	12	2
	No response	28	5
		<hr/> 569	<hr/> 100
The city has a sufficient water supply.	Strongly agree	37	6
	Agree	175	31
	Neutral	146	25
	Disagree	131	23
	Strongly disagree	61	11
	No response	23	4
		<hr/> 573	<hr/> 100
The city provides quality water.	Strongly agree	55	10
	Agree	153	27
	Neutral	136	24
	Disagree	103	18
	Strongly disagree	110	19
	No response	19	3
		<hr/> 576	<hr/> 100
The city provides adequate flood control.	Strongly agree	28	5
	Agree	238	41
	Neutral	218	38
	Disagree	51	9
	Strongly disagree	16	3
	No response	23	4
		<hr/> 574	<hr/> 100

The city provides adequate parks and playgrounds for families.	Strongly agree	67	12
	Agree	271	48
	Neutral	87	15
	Disagree	86	15
	Strongly disagree	35	6
	No response	22	4
		<hr/> 568	<hr/> 100

Schools are in good condition.	Strongly agree	30	5
	Agree	214	38
	Neutral	162	28
	Disagree	100	18
	Strongly disagree	38	7
	No response	25	4
		<hr/> 569	<hr/> 100

The city provides adequate garbage collection and disposal.	Strongly agree	120	21
	Agree	307	54
	Neutral	93	16
	Disagree	18	3
	Strongly disagree	11	2
	No response	19	3
		<hr/> 568	<hr/> 100

### **Health Care**

The area's ambulance service meets the needs of the area.	Strongly agree	67	12
	Agree	335	59
	Neutral	107	19
	Disagree	33	6
	Strongly disagree	10	2
	No response	17	3
		<hr/> 569	<hr/> 100

Emergency health care is available in the area.	Strongly agree	89	16
	Agree	367	65
	Neutral	66	12
	Disagree	23	4
	Strongly disagree	14	2
	No response	9	2
		<hr/> 568	<hr/> 100



Access to hospital services is available in the area.	Strongly agree	89	16
	Agree	382	67
	Neutral	58	10
	Disagree	17	3
	Strongly disagree	15	3
	No response	11	2
		<hr/> 572	<hr/> 100
There are an adequate number of doctors in the area.	Strongly agree	23	4
	Agree	143	25
	Neutral	99	17
	Disagree	173	30
	Strongly disagree	122	21
	No response	11	2
		<hr/> 571	<hr/> 100
Mental health care is available in the area.	Strongly agree	14	2
	Agree	127	22
	Neutral	274	48
	Disagree	80	14
	Strongly disagree	44	8
	No response	33	6
		<hr/> 572	<hr/> 100
Senior housing is available in the area.	Strongly agree	21	4
	Agree	183	32
	Neutral	184	32
	Disagree	107	19
	Strongly disagree	55	10
	No response	22	4
		<hr/> 572	<hr/> 100
Adequate accommodations are available for people with disabilities.	Strongly agree	7	1
	Agree	127	22
	Neutral	221	39
	Disagree	133	23
	Strongly disagree	58	10
	No response	27	5
		<hr/> 573	<hr/> 100

Child care is available for area children.	Strongly agree	20	3
	Agree	245	43
	Neutral	202	35
	Disagree	60	10
	Strongly disagree	18	3
	No response	27	5
		<hr/> 572	<hr/> 100
Senior programs are available in the area.	Strongly agree	25	4
	Agree	276	48
	Neutral	180	32
	Disagree	52	9
	Strongly disagree	20	4
	No response	18	3
		<hr/> 571	<hr/> 100
Drug and alcohol abuse programs are available in the area.	Strongly agree	12	2
	Agree	212	37
	Neutral	227	40
	Disagree	67	12
	Strongly disagree	30	5
	No response	21	4
		<hr/> 569	<hr/> 100
<b><u>Economic development</u></b>			
The downtown area has an attractive appearance.	Strongly agree	106	19
	Agree	336	59
	Neutral	60	11
	Disagree	49	9
	Strongly disagree	11	2
	No response	5	1
		<hr/> 567	<hr/> 100
Public buildings have an attractive appearance.	Strongly agree	54	9
	Agree	318	56
	Neutral	109	19
	Disagree	68	12
	Strongly disagree	14	2
	No response	6	1
		<hr/> 569	<hr/> 100

Neighborhoods have an attractive appearance.	Strongly agree	18	3
	Agree	138	24
	Neutral	184	32
	Disagree	167	29
	Strongly disagree	50	9
	No response	14	2
		<hr/> 571	<hr/> 100
There is an adequate amount of homes available for purchase.	Strongly agree	26	5
	Agree	195	34
	Neutral	204	36
	Disagree	93	16
	Strongly disagree	32	6
	No response	20	4
		<hr/> 570	<hr/> 100
Homes available for purchase are in good condition.	Strongly agree	6	1
	Agree	83	15
	Neutral	277	49
	Disagree	139	24
	Strongly disagree	38	7
	No response	25	4
		<hr/> 568	<hr/> 100
An adequate amount of rental housing is available (apartments and houses).	Strongly agree	7	1
	Agree	70	12
	Neutral	177	31
	Disagree	186	33
	Strongly disagree	112	20
	No response	20	3
		<hr/> 572	<hr/> 100
Available rental housing is in good condition.	Strongly agree	5	1
	Agree	46	8
	Neutral	247	43
	Disagree	180	32
	Strongly disagree	71	12
	No response	21	4
		<hr/> 570	<hr/> 100

Community members are accepting of newcomers.	Strongly agree	29	5
	Agree	213	38
	Neutral	152	27
	Disagree	96	17
	Strongly disagree	62	11
	No response	16	3
		568	100
Community members are accepting of minorities.	Strongly agree	16	3
	Agree	119	21
	Neutral	206	36
	Disagree	132	23
	Strongly disagree	83	14
	No response	17	3
		573	100
Local stores provide a variety of goods.	Strongly agree	43	8
	Agree	275	48
	Neutral	94	17
	Disagree	105	18
	Strongly disagree	44	8
	No response	7	1
		568	100
Local stores provide quality goods.	Strongly agree	46	8
	Agree	291	51
	Neutral	114	20
	Disagree	80	14
	Strongly disagree	30	5
	No response	10	2
		571	100
There are an adequate number of restaurants in the community.	Strongly agree	33	6
	Agree	181	32
	Neutral	67	12
	Disagree	181	32
	Strongly disagree	102	18
	No response	6	1
		570	100

There are an adequate number of banking and financial services in the area.	Strongly agree	123	22
	Agree	371	65
	Neutral	45	8
	Disagree	12	2
	Strongly disagree	10	2
	No response	7	1
		<hr/> 568	<hr/> 100
There are an adequate number of hotel/motel accommodations in the area.	Strongly agree	11	2
	Agree	71	13
	Neutral	92	16
	Disagree	205	36
	Strongly disagree	182	32
	No response	7	1
		<hr/> 568	<hr/> 100
Quality high speed internet access is available in the community.	Strongly agree	27	5
	Agree	186	33
	Neutral	196	35
	Disagree	77	14
	Strongly disagree	65	11
	No response	17	3
		<hr/> 568	<hr/> 100



## Appendix D. Community Review Itinerary

## St. Maries Community Review Agenda

### Tuesday 4:30 PM

Visiting Team will meet at the St Maries Federal Building, 222 S 7<sup>th</sup>, for orientation meeting.

5:15pm

Meet at Aqua Park for a cruise on the St Joe River. Boat departs at 5:30pm and will return at 6:45pm. Visiting Team will reconvene at the Federal Building for dinner.

### Wednesday

7:30 – 8:15 am Breakfast at St. Joe Bed & Breakfast

8:30 am

Idaho Rigging; begin walking tour; visit Timber Plus/Chamber Office & SM Art Council

9:30 am

SM Art Council presentation – coffee & donut break

10 am

Meet at logger memorial to begin driving tours; 3 groups

10 – noon

Group Leaders:

Stops:

Ec Dev Group

Kim / Shirley

Peets Shoe Dryer

Valley Vista

Planning Group

Carol / Janice McCall

Welch-Comer (Phil B.) Fairgrounds

Am Title (Rich N.)

Infrastructure Group

Val / Jeff / Michele

Fairgrounds

Marina/Tugs (Foss)

Airport/lagoon

Noon – 1 pm

Lunch at the Golf Course; sponsored by the Rotary Club

1 – 5 pm

Stops:

Ec Dev Group

Regulus

Potlatch

Buell Shop

Planning Group

Courthouse

-Commissioners

-Assessor

-Bldg inspector

-Planning & zoning

-Treasurer

Infrastructure Group

Courthouse

-Commissioners

-County roads dept.

-Jail

Hospital

Water filtration Plant

Railroad

5 pm

Dinner – Senior Citizen Center

7 pm

Public Forum – Eagles Hall

### Thursday

7:30am – 8:15 am

Breakfast Hosted by St. Maries School District – Heyburn Elementary School

8:30am – noon

locations:

Visiting Team groups work on reports; Meetings will be held at the following

Commerce Office

Economic Dev.

Courthouse

Land Use Planning

Federal Building

Infrastructure

Noon – 1 pm

Lunch at the Grub Box; sponsored by Kiwanis & Chamber

1 – 5 pm

Visiting Team groups work on reports;

6 pm

Dinner with City Council – Avista Building

7 pm

Public Forum – Eagles Hall

Friday, TBA

Continental Breakfast hosted by ID Commerce & Labor, St. Maries office, 105 N 8<sup>th</sup>.

## Appendix E. Community Review and Town Hall Meeting Promotional Materials





## St. Maries Community Review Public Forum

*Please plan to attend the Public Forums,  
designed to obtain input on the community  
development issues facing St. Maries and your vision  
for the future of our community.*

*Wednesday, 9/27/06 ~~ 7:00 PM ~~ Eagles Lodge,  
Opportunity to provide community input*

*Thursday, 9/28/06 ~~ 7:00 PM ~~ Eagles Lodge,  
Preliminary recommendations presentation*

*For further information/questions, contact  
Timber Plus at 208-245-2239 or  
Id. Commerce & Labor at 245-2518*

## **Appendix F. Community Review Media Coverage**



For more information about this document or the Idaho Community Review process, contact:

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Boise, Idaho 83702  
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