

Ada County

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



Update

ADA COUNTY PARK AND OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN

Prepared for:

Ada County Department of Parks and Waterways

April, 2007

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The purpose of the Ada County Park and Open Space Master Plan is to set or establish goals and policies necessary to ensure that adequate resources will be available to meet the current and future need for park and open space land, facilities and services. Meeting the community's vision will require efficient and effective planning to provide active passive outdoor recreational opportunities that are compatible with the natural and historical values of the property.

The document is divided into the following chapters.

- **Chapter 1 - Introduction:** *discusses the purpose of the plan, provides an outline of the document organization, provides an overview of the planning process and discusses the relationship with other planning documents that influence the provision of parks in the Ada County area.*
- **Chapter 2 - Existing Resources:** *includes an inventory of existing parkland and recreational areas in the Ada County area. This includes lands and facilities owned by the local jurisdictions (e.g. cities of Boise, Meridian, Kuna, Star, Garden City and Eagle), state agencies, federal agencies, private organizations and the local school districts.*
- **Chapter 3 – Recreation Demand (Public Involvement):** *provides a summary of the community workshop meetings, questionnaires and advisory committee guidance.*
- **Chapter 4 – Roles and Responsibilities:** *includes a summary of the current providers and their ability to meet current needs; the ability and desire of the County to provide selected services; public input on the County's role in providing recreation services; and the recreation demand in an effort to clearly define what role the Ada County should assume in delivering park and recreation services in the community.*
- **Chapter 5 – Needs Assessment and Service Level Standards:** *identifies the county's need for park services (e.g. land, facilities and programs) based on the community's preferences and through a review and comparison of standards, goals and policies review by the planning sub-committee.*
- **Chapter 6 - Plan Recommendations:** *summarizes the planning concept, identifies recommendations and policies for the acquisition and development of future parks, open space and trail locations. This chapter also includes recommendations and policies for administration, management and operation of the park and open space system.*
- **Chapter 7 - Implementation:** *provides a partial list of potential funding sources, identifies project priorities, suggests a financing strategy, and recommends a six-year capital improvement program. Also identifies other actions needed to implement the plan.*
- **Appendix A – Recreation Resources Inventory Tables**

In addition to the report, several background reports were prepared during the study process. These documents included:

- *Working Draft Section #1 – Recreation Resources*
- *Working Draft Section #2 –Programs and Services*
- *Working Draft Section #3 – Recreation Demand*
- *Working Draft Section #4 – Roles and Responsibilities*
- *Working Draft Section #5 – Need for Park and Recreation Services*
- *Working Draft Section #6 – Service Levels*
- *Working Draft Section #7 – Action Plan*

1.2 PLANNING PROCESS & PUBLIC INPUT

This Park and Open Space Master Plan was prepared using a participatory process with public input throughout the project. Listed below is a summary of the process and opportunity for public involvement.

Task	Timeframe	Communication Method
Public Workshop	November 2005	Public Meetings - Issues/Needs and Questionnaire
Recreation Resources	January 2005	Advisory Committee Meeting; Printed Document - Working Draft Report #1
Programs and Services	January 2005	Advisory Committee Meeting; Printed Document - Working Draft Report #2
Recreation Demand	February 2006	Advisory Committee Meeting; Printed Document - Working Draft Report#3
Roles and Responsibilities	February 2006	Advisory Committee Meeting; Printed Document - Working Draft Report#4
Need for Park and Recreation Services	March 2006	Advisory Committee Meeting; Printed Document - Working Draft Report#5
Service Levels	April 2006	Advisory Committee Meeting; Printed Document - Working Draft Report#6
Action Plan	May 2006	Advisory Committee Meeting; Printed Document - Working Draft Report#7
Public Workshops	May 2006	Public Meetings - Goals/Policies and Priorities
Draft Master Plan	July 2006	Draft Document
Public Workshops	August 2006	Public Meetings – Draft Plan Review
Final Master Plan	September 2006	Draft Document
Planning Commission Hearing		Public Hearings & Comment
County Commissioners Hearing		Public Hearings & Comment

Great effort and time was expended throughout the process to ensure that county residents had ample opportunity to give input and receive information about the Park and Open Space Master Plan.

1.3 INTEGRATION WITH OTHER PLANNING DOCUMENTS

There have been several documents and studies prepared that influence, to a varying degree, the provision of park services within the County. These documents were reviewed for policies, guidelines, and relevant information that could be incorporated and used to prepare the County's Parks and Open Space Master Plan. Each of these is listed below:

- *Park and Recreation Considerations and Planned Communities - September 2005*
- *Recreation Use at the Swan Fall Hydroelectric Project - December 2002*
- *Oregon Trail Historic Reserve Resource Management Plan - November 1998*
- *City of Boise Comprehensive Park and Recreation System Plan Update - 2003*
- *Corridor Management Plan for Western Heritage Historic Byway - 2004*
- *Barber Pool Conservation Area Master Plan - September 2002*
- *Ada County Comprehensive Goals and Policies - Unknown Date*
- *Idaho Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Plan - 2003*
- *Stewardship Plan for the Riparian Corridor from Barber Park to Glenwood Bridge - October 2002*
- *State Park Classification and Resource Area Designation System - August 2005*
- *Barber Park Master Plan – 2003*

CHAPTER 2

RECREATION RESOURCES

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Currently, Ada County is one of several agencies that provide park and open space/trails facilities within the County. Other agencies, including Bureau of Land Management (BLM); US Forest Service (USFS); Idaho State Parks; Idaho Fish and Game; Idaho Power Company; Western Idaho Fairgrounds; Western Ada Recreation District; the cities of Boise, Meridian, Kuna, Garden City, Eagle, and Star; the school districts of Boise, Meridian and Kuna; and various private providers all contribute to the recreational opportunities in the region.

2.2 PARK AND RECREATION AREAS (ALL AGENCIES)

Listed below is a summary of the park, recreation and open space areas located within the Ada County area.

Table 2.1
Summary of Parks and Facilities
Ada County Planning Area

Park Site	Total Park Land (Acres)	Number of Sites
Municipal Park and Facilities		
Boise	2,923.49	105
Eagle	85.00	7
Garden City	67.5	4
Kuna	65.02	13
Meridian	179.13	14
Star	4.5	1
Total Municipal Areas	3,251.34	144
Ada County		
Fairgrounds ⁽¹⁾	123.94	4
Parks and Waterways	2,272.59	46
Total County Areas	2,396.53	50

⁽¹⁾ Includes Les Boise Racing Park, Boise Hawks Stadium and Expo RV & Campground.

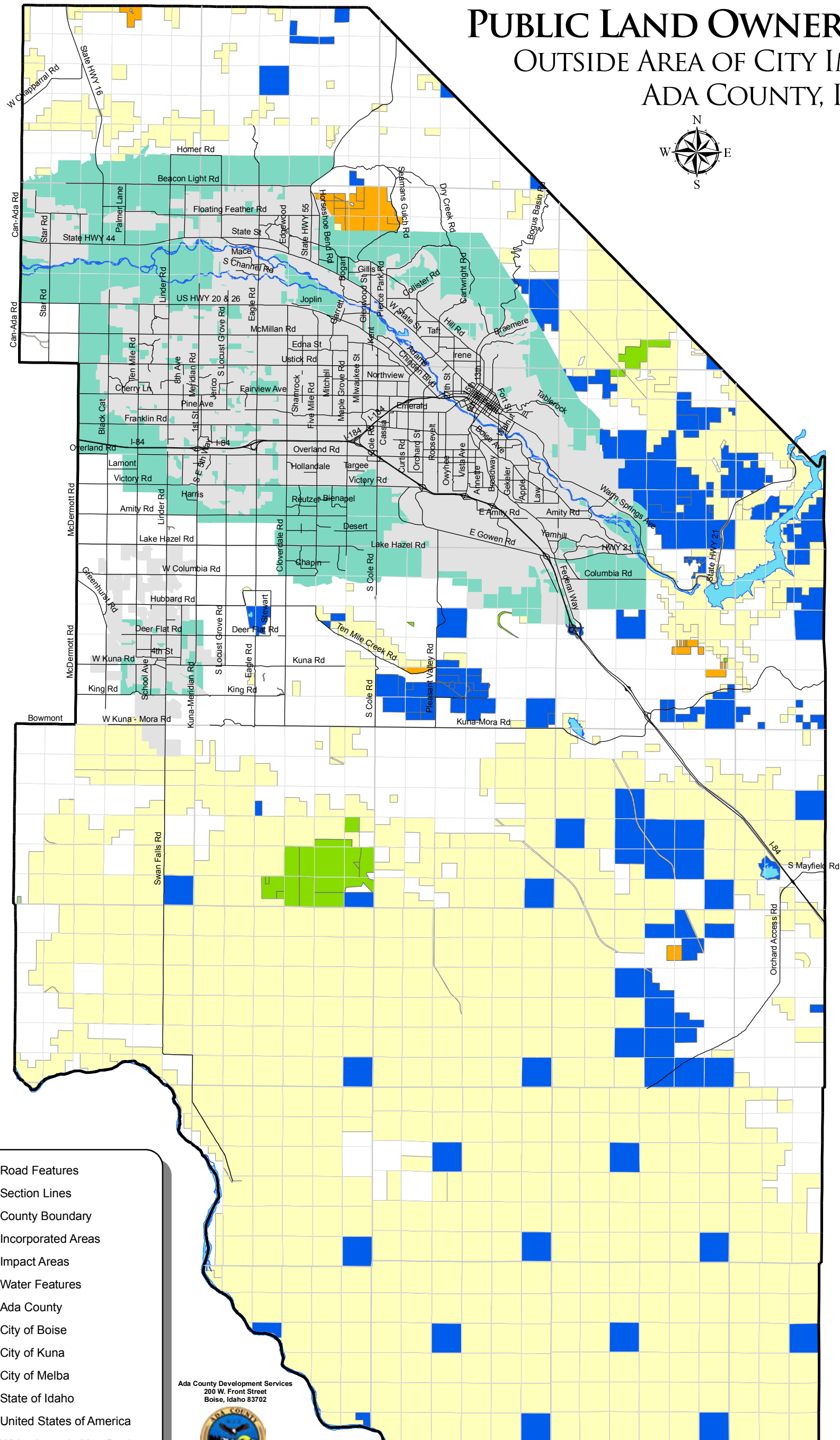
Table 2.1 Continued

Park Site	Total Park Land (Acres)	Number of Sites
District		
Highway District	NA	NA
Western Ada Recreation District	22.00	1
Total District Areas	22.00	1
State of Idaho		
Department Of State Lands	36,482.00	NA
Fish and Game	7,781.00	NA
Historical Society	NA	0
Parks and Recreation	1,548.82	6
Transportation	NA	NA
Total State Areas	45,811.82	6
Federal		
US Agriculture - Forest Service	4,211.00	NA
US Defense - Corp of Engineers	4,170.00	NA
US Interior - Bureau of Land Management	192,159.00	NA
US interior – Bureau of Reclamation	105,599.00	NA
Total Federal Areas	306,139.00	
Public Schools		
Boise School District	609.42	48
Kuna School District	97.59	7
Meridian School District	675.16	44
Total Public School Areas	1382.17+	99
Non Profit		
Idaho Foundation for Parks and Lands	465.36	1
Total Non Profit Areas	465.36	1
Other		
Boise State University	101.52	1
Boys and Girls Club	NA	2
Idaho Power	NA	5
Private Fitness/Health Clubs	NA	NA
Private Golf Courses	653.85	6
Private Schools	114.61	9
YMCA	NA	2
Total Other Areas	869.98+	25
Total	360,972.14	324

Note: Information included in this table and in Figure 2.2 is based on readily available GIS data obtained when this Plan was updated in 2006/2007 and may not include all open space properties owned or managed by local jurisdictions. More detailed information may be available from those jurisdictions.

FIGURE 2.1

PUBLIC LAND OWNERSHIP OUTSIDE AREA OF CITY IMPACT ADA COUNTY, IDAHO



- Road Features
- Section Lines
- County Boundary
- Incorporated Areas
- Impact Areas
- Water Features
- Ada County
- City of Boise
- City of Kuna
- City of Melba
- State of Idaho
- United States of America
- White Areas in Map Depict Private Ownership Parcels

Ada County Development Services
200 W. Front Street
Boise, Idaho 83702



www.adaweb.net

This map is made in part from data prepared or compiled by Ada County. Ada County shall not be liable for inaccuracies or misuse of this map or data.

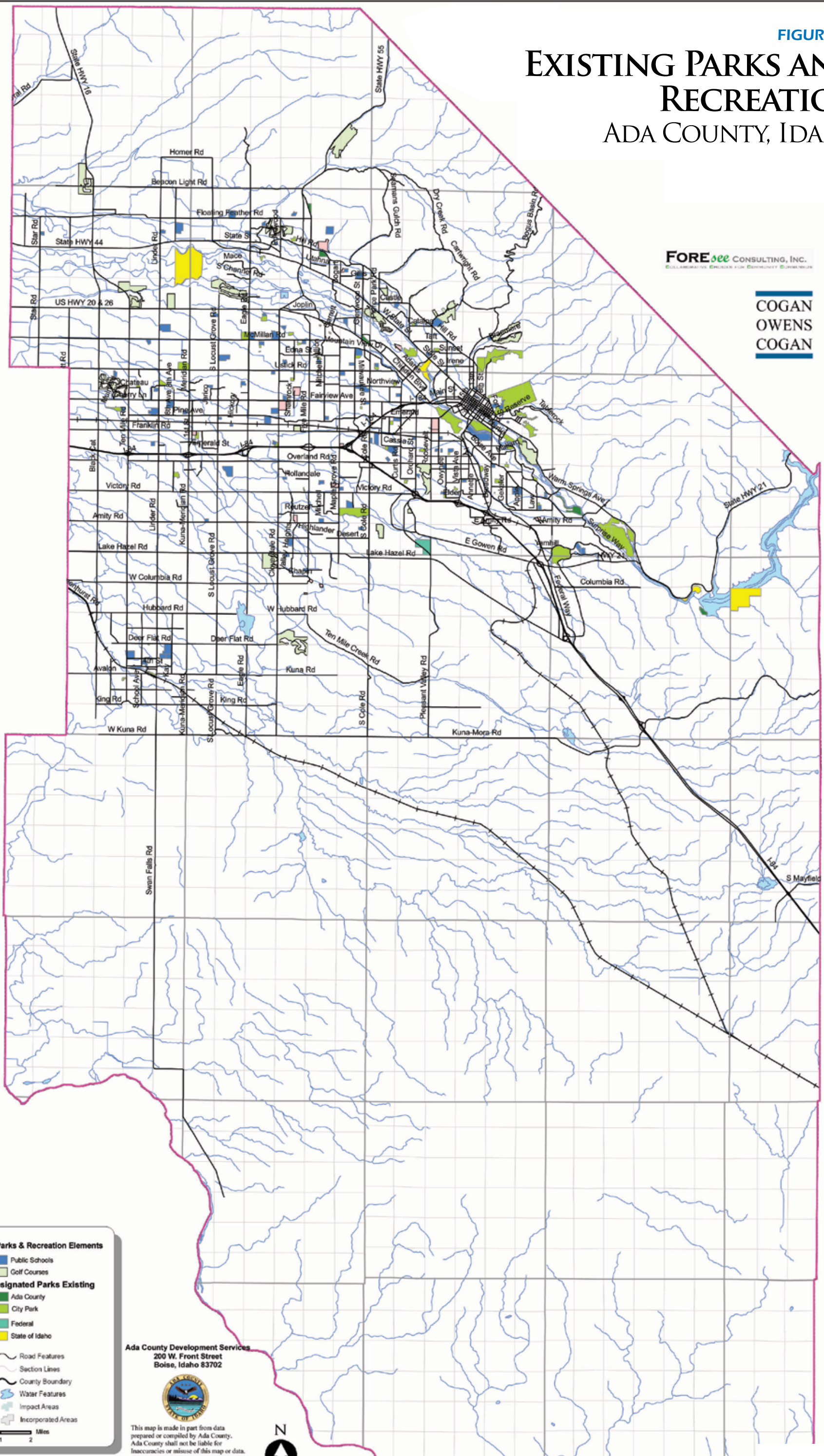
0 1.25 2.5 5 Miles

FIGURE 2.2

EXISTING PARKS AND RECREATION ADA COUNTY, IDAHO

FOREsee CONSULTING, INC.
COLLABORATIVE ENGINEERS FOR ENVIRONMENT & DEVELOPMENT

COGAN
OWENS
COGAN



Existing Parks & Recreation Elements

- Public Schools
- Golf Courses

Designated Parks Existing

- Ada County
- City Park
- Federal
- State of Idaho

- Road Features
- Section Lines
- County Boundary
- Water Features
- Impact Areas
- Incorporated Areas

0 1 2 Miles

Ada County Development Services
200 W. Front Street
Boise, Idaho 83702



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2.3 PARK LAND DEFINITIONS

In order to address specific land needs, park, open space and recreational areas have been divided into categories. Each category provides a distinct type of recreational opportunity. The ideal park system is made up of several different types or classifications of parks. The classification system proposed in Ada County is as follows:

- **Mini Parks** ⁽¹⁾: *Mini-parks, tot lots and children's playgrounds are all small, single purpose play lots designed primarily for small children usage. Due to their size (generally less than 2 acres), the facilities are usually limited to a small open grass area, a children's playground and a small picnic area.*
- **Neighborhood Parks** ⁽¹⁾: *Neighborhood parks are a combination playground and park, designed primarily for non-supervised, non-organized recreation activities. They are generally small in size (3-10 acres) and serve an area of approximately one-half mile radius. Typically, facilities found in a neighborhood park include a children's playground, picnic areas, trails, open grass areas for passive use, outdoor basketball courts and multi-use sport fields. Optimum size is roughly 5 acres.*
- **Community Parks** ⁽¹⁾: *A community park is planned primarily to provide active and structured recreation opportunities. In general, community park facilities are designed for organized activities and sports, although individual and family activities are also encouraged. Community parks serve a much larger area and offer more facilities. As a result, they require more in terms of support facilities such as parking, restrooms, and covered play areas. Community parks usually have sport fields or similar facilities as the central focus of the park. Their service area is roughly a 1-2 mile radius. Optimum size is roughly 20 acres.*
- **Large Urban Parks** ⁽¹⁾: *Large urban parks are parks designed to serve the entire community. Generally, they provide a wide variety of specialized facilities such as sports fields, indoor recreation areas, and large picnic areas. Due to their size and facilities offered, they require more in terms of support facilities such as parking, restrooms, and play areas. They usually exceed 50 acres in size and should be designed to accommodate large numbers of people.*
- **Regional Parks**: *Regional parks are recreational areas serving the community and beyond. They are usually large in size and often include one specific use or feature that makes them unique. Typically, use focuses on passive types of recreational activities. Those located within urban areas sometimes offer a wider range of facilities and activities.*
- **Special Use Areas**: *Special use areas are miscellaneous public recreation areas or land occupied by a specialized facility. Some of the uses falling into this classification include special purpose areas, community gardens, single purpose sites used for field sports or sites occupied by buildings.*
- **Linear Parks**: *Linear parks are developed landscaped areas and other lands that follow linear corridors such as abandoned railroad right-of-ways, canals, powerlines and other elongated features (e.g. rivers, streams, etc.). This type of park usually contains trails, landscaped areas, viewpoints and seating areas. Where linear corridors follow natural water courses, they are sometimes referred to as greenbelts.*
- **Natural Open Space/Reserves**: *Natural Open space is defined as land primarily left in its native or wild condition, and is generally ungrooved and unirrigated. This type of land often includes wetlands; wildlife habitat areas; stream corridors; unique, rare or native plant species; scenic ridgelines; recreational trails, unique rocky outcrops. Steep*

hillsides are included in this definition by virtue of the sensitivity and erosion potential. Not included are golf courses, drainage basins that do not provide other open space values, boulevards and planting strips.

- **Undeveloped Land:** This is undeveloped land and has not been designated for a specific park use at this time.

⁽¹⁾ Typically, these types of parks areas are located in “urban” areas and are provided by municipal agencies. Currently, several of the incorporated cities within the County provide these types of areas.

2.4 COUNTY PARK AND RECREATION AREAS

The Ada County park and open space system consists of both active and passive recreational areas that are owned and/or leased and managed by Ada County or leased to others organizations by the County. The current system contains regional and linear parks, natural open space area, special use areas (boating facilities and sports complexes) and paved and unpaved trails.

Table 2.2
Summary of County Park and Recreation Facilities
 Ada County Planning Area

Park Site	Total Park Land (Acres)	Number of Sites
Regional Parks	67.16	1
Natural Open Space Areas	1,471.50	6
Conservation Easements	375.60	4
Linear Parks	9.6 Miles (58 Acres)	12
Special Use Areas		
Sports Complexes (<i>leased to others</i>)	304.00	⁽¹⁾ 3
Trails	21.73 Miles	16
Trailhead Park Areas	21	2
Trail Easements	2	2
Total County Areas	2,272.59	46

⁽¹⁾ Excludes Les Boise Racing Parks, Boise Hawks Stadium and Expo RV & Campground.

Ada County has the unique opportunity of owning and managing several parks, linear parks/trail corridors, open space and waterways.

REGIONAL PARKS

- *Ada County owns one regional park: Barber Park.*

SPECIAL USE AREAS

- *Ada County also owns several special use facilities including three sports complexes (Lady Bird Park (20 acres); Simplot (200 acres), and Eagle (84 acres)), the Western Idaho Fairgrounds (34 acres), the Boise Hawks Stadium (5 acres), the Les Bois Horse Racing Park (75 acres) and On the River RV Racing Park (10 acres). All of these facilities are leased and privately operated by other agencies or organizations.*

LINEAR PARKS/TRAIL CORRIDORS

- *Ada County has several trails, pathways, greenways, view corridors, rivers, and historic trails, including the Oregon Trail and Dry Creek Valley, the foothills trails and equestrian trails. The Ridge to Rivers Pathway Plan (updated in 1997) has helped establish over 100 miles of hiking, mountain biking and equestrian trails within the Boise foothills and Ada County.*

Table 2.3
Summary of Linear Parks/Trail Corridors
 Ada County

Greenbelt Facility	Miles	Ownership
Warm Springs GC to Starview	1.20	ACHD with informal maintenance agreement
Starview to Eckert Path	1.40	County
Eckert Path to Eckert Rd.	0.10	County
Eckert Rd. to Council Springs Rd	0.20	Boise Claims Annexation
Council Springs Rd. to Gregerson	0.70	ITD or ACHD LWCF 6F
Gregerson to Diversion Dam	1.90	County
Diversion Dam to Discovery Park	1.60	ITD with Ada County Management Agreement
Warm Springs to Boise Ave.	0.50	Easement
Eckert to River Run via Barber Park	0.60	County
Barber Park Loop	0.30	County
Island bridge to Glenwood Ave.	0.50	County
Glenwood from Chinden to the Boise River	0.60	County
Total	9.60	

OPEN SPACE AREAS

- *The County currently owns or leases over 1,471 acres of natural open space land. A significant portion of this land (750 acres) is located at the Hidden Hollow Landfill. There are also approximately 375 acres of open space land protected by County conservation easements.*

Table 2.4
Summary of Open Space Areas
Ada County

Open Space Area	Acres	Ownership
Open Space		
Barber Pools	35.00	County
5mile & Victory Wetlands	2.50	County (ACHD also owns 2.5 acres)
Hidden Hollow Landfill	750.00	County Landfill Recreation Area
Vets Cemetery	80.00	State Vets Admin Easement
Seaman Gulch	227.00	County Landfill Recreation Area
Hubbard Reservoir	377.00	State Dept Lands
	0	
Conservation Easements		
	0	
Hidden Springs	300.00	Conservation Easement
Echanove Ranch	12.00	Conservation Easement
Red Hawk Estates	50.00	Conservation Easement
Oregon Trail Potter	13.60	Conservation Easement
Total	1,847.10	

- *Ada County has delineated two greenway/historic corridors in the County. The Dry Creek Greenway is protected by a county conservation easement and includes Dry Creek and its tributaries. The Oregon Trail Historic Greenway is an overlay of the Oregon Trail that runs through the county beginning as it moves north along I-84 and then to the west through the City of Boise. The Oregon Trail is neither owned nor managed by the County. However, it does own the 20 acre Oregon Trail parking lot and there are plans to provide interpretive facilities in the future. In total, the County owns, manages or protects (under conservation easement) approximately 22 miles of trails and 23 acres of trailhead parking facilities .*

Table 2.5
Summary of Miscellaneous Trail Segments
Ada County

Trails	Miles	Ownership
Trail Segments		
		Fee Title (6F)
Barber Park Walking Trails	1.30	Fee Title (6F)
Corrals Trail	4.00	License Agreement
Scott's Trail	1.00	License Agreement

Trails	Miles	Ownership
Hard Guy	4.55	License Agreement
Dry Creek at Hidden Springs	1.00	Easement
Red Tail Trail	3.40	Easement
Lookout Loop	0.30	Easement
Bitterbrush Trail	0.20	Easement
Meadowlark Trail	0.20	Easement
Currant Creek Trail	0.80	Easement
Dry Creek at Echanove	0.50	Easement
Upper Dry Creek	0.30	License Agreement
Wild Phlox	0.78	Fee Title-Landfill Recreation Area
Seaman Gulch Trails	1.80	Fee-SWM
Hard Guy to Dry Creek	0.80	License Agreement
Vets Cemetery Trail	0.80	License Agreement
Trailhead Parking Facilities		
Miller Gulch	1 Ac.	Easement
Dry Creek at Hidden Springs	1 Ac.	Easement
Seaman Gulch	1 Ac.	Fee Title-Landfill Recreation Area
Oregon Trail Lot	20 Ac.	Fee Title-ITD Surplus

WATERWAYS

- *Waterways (including the Boise and Snake Rivers and Lucky Peak Reservoir) play a significant role in Ada County's overall park and recreation system.*
- *The Boise River is the lifeblood of Ada County, providing the major source of irrigation (canals) to the acres of agricultural land converted from former desert land. The Boise River is also one of the largest recreational and scenic attractions within the county. County facilities along the river include Barber Park and the Greenbelt system (see Park and Recreation Facilities section for more detail on these locations). In addition, the Ada County Waterway department is responsible for 630 boat docks and 2 boat ramps at Lucky Peak Reservoir, which is located east of Boise along State Highway 21 within Lucky Peak State Park.*
- *The Snake River located on Ada County's southwestern boarder is one of the wildest rivers in the U.S. The section of the river on the County's border is relatively undeveloped, although informal networks of trails can be found near the river. The Snake River provides many fishing, boating, and swimming areas as well as historical sites, however, none of these are owned or operated by the county.*

2.5 RECREATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Within Ada County, there are a number of agencies and organizations that offer recreation programs and services. These groups include the cities of Boise and Meridian; the school districts of Boise, Kuna and Meridian; and private organizations, such as the YMCA, Boys and Girls Club and private sports groups. Currently, Ada County does not provide any recreation programs or services.

Listed on the following page is a partial overview of the types of programs and services offered by each jurisdiction.

Federal

- *The federal agencies (US Forest Services and Bureau of Land Management) offer some limited environmental education classes.*

State

- *State Parks offers some limited outdoor recreation programs.*

County

- *The Western Idaho State Fair offers some limited programs associated with the operation of the Fair.*
- *The Sherriff office offers classes in boating safety.*
- *The Parks and Waterways Department offers some limited environmental education classes.*

School Districts

- *The school districts (Boise, Kuna and Meridian) offer competitive sports programs for grades 5th through 12th. Club programs are also available for selected sports programs. The districts also offer some limited educational programs.*

Municipal

- *The cities of Boise and Meridian offer a wide range of recreation and sports programs.*

Districts

- *No formal programs are available*

Non Profit

- *Non-profit organizations offer a wide range of programs and services. The YMCA and Boys/Girls Clubs in particular offer a variety of sports and recreation classes.*

Organized Sports

- *Private organizations offer selected programs and services in targeted sporting events.*

Private

- *Private schools and colleges (depending on the organization) offer varying levels of programs and services.*

2.6 OTHER RESOURCES

Refer to Appendix A for detailed tables outlining individual park and recreational resources. The tables are as follows:

- **Table A.1** – *County Park and Recreation Lands.*
- **Table A.2** – *Other Public Recreation Lands*
- **Table A.3** – *Pubic School Recreation Areas*
- **Table A.4** – *Private Recreation Areas*
- **Table A.5** - *Recreation Programs and Services*

CHAPTER 3

RECREATION DEMAND

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The demand for park, recreational facilities and services is largely dependent upon the desires, attitudes and needs expressed by the community residents. In Ada County, several public input processes (e.g., survey information from the Idaho SCORPT; public workshop meetings; steering committee, parks and open space subcommittee and staff input; and the park and open space questionnaire) were used to identify the demand for park and recreation services. Each of these is discussed in detail on the following pages.

3.2 IDAHO STATEWIDE COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION AND TOURISM PLAN (SCORTP) ISSUES

Listed below are some issues identified in Idaho's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Plan (SCORTP). The issues are ranked in terms of public's priority of importance.

Table 3.1
SCORTP Priority Issues
State of Idaho

Issues	Public Rank (¹)	Task Force Rank (²)
Protecting water quality	1	1
Protecting existing access to public lands	2	*
Protecting natural resources on public lands	3	3
Educating youth about natural resources and the environment	4	6
Controlling invasive species	5	7
Educating adult about natural resources and the environment	6	9
Providing recreation safety instruction for youth	7	10
Providing outdoor recreation education for youth	8	12
Providing access for the disabled	9	*
Rehabilitating outdoor recreation facilities	10	4
Providing additional access to public lands for outdoor recreation	11	11
Providing recreation safety instruction for adults	12	*
Providing recreation facilities to encourage exercise for health	13	13
Acquiring land for recreation use	14	6
Managing dispersed recreation use on public lands	15	5
Providing recreational trails to connect communities with each other and	16	2

Issues	Public Rank (¹)	Task Force Rank (²)
with recreation areas		
Providing designated ATV trail systems	17	*
Providing cross-country skiing trail systems	18	8
Providing designated snowmobile trail systems	19	12

(¹) Recreation Survey (1, 015 random household surveys)

(²) Committee composed of professional park and recreation staff (22 individuals)

Source: 2002 Idaho SCORTP

3.3 IDAHO STATEWIDE COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION AND TOURISM PLAN (SCORTP) PARTICIPATION LEVELS

Listed below is a comparison of the national recreation participation levels and Idaho participation levels for selected activities. Activities which are bolded have a higher participation level than the national average.

Table 3.2
Participation Comparisons
Selected Geographic Areas

Activity	National Participation	Idaho Participation
Walking for Pleasure	83.8	64.3
Hiking	33.4	55.3
Wildlife Viewing (not birds)	41.9	51.8
Swimming in Natural Water	43.8	44.8
Bird Watching	33.3	35.9
Viewing Fish	23.4	35.9
Camping (at Developed Sites)	25.4	34.2
Hunt Big Game	8.2	34.2
Photography	55.1	33.1
Participation in Outdoor Sports (e.g. soccer, softball, baseball, etc.)	21.9	30.8
Mountain Biking	20.9	26.2
Hunt Small Game	7.0	24.8
Downhill Skiing	8.3	24.0
Motor Boating	24.4	22.9
Camping (at Primitive Sites)	15.4	22.3
Snowmobiling	5.3	19.4
Waterskiing	8.2	18.8
Snowboarding	4.6	16.3
Rafting	9.7	16.2
Horseback Riding	9.8	16.1
Canoeing	9.5	14.9

Activity	National Participation	Idaho Participation
Cross-Country Skiing	3.9	14.4
Hunt Waterfowl	2.3	13.1
Backpacking	10.8	11.3
Personal Watercraft	9.5	10.1
Kayaking	3.2	6.0
Sailing	5.1	2.3
Windsurfing	0.8	0.4

Source: 2002 Idaho SCORTP

3.4 ADA COUNTY PARK AND OPEN SPACE PLAN SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS ISSUES

Participants identified the following issues associated with parks, recreation, open space and trails in the **unincorporated** portions of the County.

Environmental Related Issues:

- Floodway management and planning, which can have a significant impact on open space and recreation planning.
- Character of area and landscape.

Transportation Related Issues:

- Connectivity between schools, parks and open spaces.

Planning Related Issues:

- Foothills – conservation of large blocks of undeveloped land that are important habitat areas.
- Wildlife habitat areas – preservation of lands to view and appreciate wildlife. Sizes vary depending on the types of species.
- Potential uses of County Landfill
- Geographic Distribution of Parks and Recreation Areas
- Preservation of Unique Places and/or Features - Identify and protect areas, including rock shelters, viewpoints, historical resources, hot springs, and wetlands.
- Regional parks
- Open Space - access to land.

Management/Operational Related Issues:

- Define the County role in providing parks, open space and trails.
- Identify desired level of service and appropriate service area.

- *Identify cost of providing and maintaining services and facilities.*
- *Monitoring recreational use/activity on County, state and federal lands.*
- *Management of open spaces.*
- *Developing partnerships with surrounding communities.*
- *Identifying funding alternatives and sources.*
- *Management and use of Boise River*
- *Providing technical assistance, partnerships and initial development of facilities in the smaller communities*
- *Use of annexation as a mechanism to acquire/reserve parkland.*

3.5 ADA COUNTY PARK AND OPEN SPACE PLAN PUBLIC WORKSHOP MEETINGS

On November 28, 29 and 30, 2005, the Ada County held a series of public workshop meetings. The meetings were conducted in Boise, Lake Hazel and Eagle, respectively. Approximately 210 people attended the meetings in total. At each meeting, participants listened to a brief presentation about the Comprehensive Project, including its objectives, schedule and key elements and topics to be addressed. They then participated in two rounds of small group discussions. In the first round, they reviewed, discussed and refined a set of community value and vision statements drafted by the project Steering Committee. In a second round of discussions, participants had a choice of discussing one of three topics. Parks and open space was one of three possible topics for people to discuss during the small group discussions at the public workshop meeting.

A total of four groups talked about this topic. Each group was asked to draft a list of priority park, open space and trails needs in Ada County. Typically, each group member was asked to list their top three priority needs or issues. Next, they were asked to indicate which needs are currently not being adequately met by the County or other agencies that provide park and recreational services or facilities. Each group completed this exercise somewhat differently. For example, some groups discussed needs and unmet needs simultaneously. Some prioritized needs while others did not. The following table summarizes needs identified by multiple groups and how one group prioritized each need.

Listed on the following page is a summary of issues generated from these discussions.

Table 3.3
Priority Issues
 Ada County, Idaho

Items/Issue	No. Groups Discussed	Relative Priority
Need to create or preserve trails, including connected, accessible quality trails systems that accommodate multiple users (hikers, equestrians and bicyclists); historic trails also were mentioned	4	High
Financing mechanisms and/or a higher level of funding priority for parks, open space, trails and other recreation; suggested mechanisms include non-profit groups, volunteers, donations, and cooperative agreements	3	Medium
Equestrian facilities, including trails, parking, access and other facilities	2	Medium
Cooperative agreements and partnerships to acquire, maintain and manage park and recreation land, resources and programs among government agencies, non-profits, developers, volunteers and others	3	
Protection of water resources or water-related parks	2	Low
Wildlife/habitat protection, including conservation easements	2	
Identify and protect unique or special natural, cultural, historic, geological, biological or other resources or places	2	

Additional issues or needs (mentioned once only) included the following:

- *Require developers to pay for protection of wildlife habitat.*
- *Separate open space from habitat.*
- *Preservation of a desert environment.*
- *Landscape requirements.*
- *Historic trails office.*
- *Develop standards for park and recreational needs.*
- *Multi-use facilities.*
- *Develop and implement a site/master plan for Hubbard Reservoir.*
- *Motorcycles need trails and trailheads.*
- *More restrooms at trailheads.*
- *River Trail to County line.*
- *Setbacks along Boise River and streams.*
- *Continue Greenbelt west along the river.*

Only one group discussed unmet needs separately, including the following:

Table 3.4
Unmet Needs
 Ada County, Idaho

Parks and Open Spaces: Demand (Unmet Needs)	Priority (dots)
Not adequate parking (particularly for horse access) North foothill trails 8th Street	6
Preserve horse trails and areas in natural areas	5
Vehicle, group for trail and open space funding	3
Overall guiding policies and vision for how the County will manage open space What role they will play Coordination with other agencies Manage conflicts	3
Let community sports have access to school fields Joint use Better use of existing facilities	2
More structured sports facilities/fields, e.g. soccer	1
Think about non-traditional recreation. Make use of natural resources (river, rock climbing)	1

One group discussed potential partnerships in detail, discussing the need for the county and others to define their respective roles, create a comprehensive organization to address park and recreation needs within the county, and bring political and community pressure to bear to better work together to meet these needs.

PRIORITY COUNTY ACTIONS

Each group was presented with a list of potential actions the County could take to help meet park, open space, trail and other recreation needs in the unincorporated portions of the County. Participants were asked to add to the list, if needed. They then participated in an exercise to prioritize possible County actions. A total of four groups talked about this topic. Actions identified in the original list are shown in plain text in the table below. Actions added to the list are shown in italics. The table indicates the number of groups that prioritized each action as high, medium or low, based on the results of each individual prioritization exercise. The table also indicates the combined total number of “votes” received.

Table 3.5
Priority Actions
 Ada County, Idaho

Activities	No. of Groups			Total “Votes”
	High	Medium	Low	
Acquire land for open space	2	2	0	21
Develop a regional trail system	1	3	0	18.5
<i>Provide equestrian facilities and trails</i>	0	1	0	9
<i>Conservation easements for critical wildlife habitat</i>	0	1	0	8
<i>Identify and implement funding alternatives</i>	0	1	1	8
Acquire of land for waterfront	0	2	2	7
Acquire land for regional parks	0	1	3	5
<i>Preserve historic trail system</i>	1	0	0	4.5
Develop existing parks (sites currently undeveloped)	0	1	3	4
<i>Develop access and designated trails in natural open areas</i>	0	0	1	3
<i>Open space inventory</i>	0	0	1	2
Improve existing parks	0	0	4	1
<i>Preserve and protect habitat along streams and riparian areas</i>	0	0	1	1
Provide recreation services	0	0	4	0

3.6 ADA COUNTY PARK AND OPEN SPACE PLAN QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

In a written questionnaire distributed at the meetings, respondents were asked to respond to a variety of questions related to parks and recreation. Following is a summary of preliminary questionnaire results related to these topics.

What types of parks should Ada County provide? (please check all that apply)

Percent	Response
88%	Trails/pathways
74%	Open space/reserves
53%	Regional parks serving the entire county
43%	Riverfront parks (e.g. Barber Park)
40%	Local parks (neighborhood and community parks) in unincorporated areas
40%	Local parks (neighborhood and community parks) in the smaller cities (Star, Kuna, etc.)
34%	Large urban/district parks in unincorporated areas
25%	Campgrounds
20%	Sports complexes/indoor recreation space in unincorporated areas
16%	Sports complexes/indoor recreation space in the smaller cities (Star, Kuna, etc.)

On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = not important at all and 5 = very important, please indicate how important it is for the County to acquire additional waterfront land for recreational use.

1, Not important at all	2, Not important	3, Neutral	4, Somewhat important	5, Very important
9%	9%	17%	29%	36%

How should additional waterfront land be used or developed? (Please select all that apply.)

Percentage	Response
85%	Trails and pathways
74%	Wildlife viewing/natural habitat areas
46%	Day use facilities (multi-use, picnic area and playgrounds)
27%	Boating facilities
12%	Do not feel additional lands are needed
11%	Athletic facilities (sports fields)

On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = not important at all and 5 = very important, please indicate how important is it, relative to other park areas, for the County to acquire additional land within the Boise Foothills for trail use?

1, Not important at all	2, Not important	3, Neutral	4, Somewhat important	5, Very important
2%	8%	10%	17%	59%

In developing future trails and pathways in the Boise Foothills area, which types of pathways or trails are most needed? Please prioritize by writing a #1 for your first choice, a #2 for your second choice, a #3 for your third choice, etc.

Average Rating	Response
1.36	Unpaved trails for walking, hiking and mountain bikes
2.13	Unpaved trails for equestrian use
2.40	Paved trails for bicycling, walking, in-line skating, etc.
3.49	Do not feel more trails are needed

Do you feel the County should offer sports and recreation programs to County residents?

Percentage	Response
30%	Yes
61%	No

If you answered “yes” to question #13, which of the following approaches do you feel would be the most effective and efficient way to provide these types of services?

Percentage	Response
21%	Ada County provide recreation staff and programs
15%	Encourage School District to offer recreation programs
6%	Contract with City of Boise and/or City of Meridian to offer recreation programs.
6%	Contract with private agencies to offer recreation programs
52%	Other (many suggested combinations of the above)

Which of the following facilities are most needed in Ada County today? Please prioritize the entire list for both the County as a whole and for only the unincorporated portions of the County. Please prioritize by writing a #1 for your first choice, a #2 for your second choice, a #3 for your third choice, etc. in each column.

County-Wide		Unincorporated Areas Only		Category
Rank	Average	Rank	Average	
1	2.25	2	2.40	County-Wide Trail System
2	2.27	1	2.27	Open Space/Reserves
3	2.82	4	3.10	Local Parks (e.g. neighborhood and community parks)
4	3.11	3	2.82	Regional Parks
5	3.40	5	3.15	Waterfront Parks, Activity Areas and Waysides
6	4.44	6	4.66	Recreation Programs and Services
7	5.86	7	6.63	Other

In which area should the County spend most of its efforts? Please prioritize the following choices by writing a #1 for your first preference, a #2 for your second preference, a #3 for your third preference, etc.

Rank	Average	Category
1	1.68	Acquiring land for future parks, open space, recreation facilities, trails.
2	2.29	Maintaining existing parks, open space areas, and trails.
3	2.73	Expanding or renovating existing parks, open space areas and trails, including the replacement and or improvement of existing facilities.
4	2.96	Developing new parks, facilities and trails (assumes development has already occurred).

CHAPTER 4

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Within the context of a comprehensive park and recreation program, there is a wide spectrum of programs and services that could potentially be provided by any single agency. Defining what services any one agency should provide requires balancing the recreation demands within the community with other factors such as limited financial resources, political realities, geographical boundaries and other conditions.

To assist in this determination, information from several sources is being considered, including defining current providers and their ability to meet current needs; the ability and desire of the County to provide selected services; public input on the County's role in providing recreation services; and the recreation demand. These factors have been considered in recommending what role the Ada County should assume in delivering park and recreation services in the community.

Once this role has been determined, a vision for park and recreational services in the community can be prepared, the role for the Parks and Waterways Department can be articulated, and a list of policies, goals and objectives related to park and recreation services can be prepared.

4.2 CURRENT PROVIDERS OF PARK AND RECREATION SERVICES

Beginning below is an analysis of the current park and recreation suppliers in the Ada County. The following matrices generally demonstrate by whom and to what extent recreation services are provided. The following definitions apply to the provision of services.

Full: Agency offers a full range of services or provides facilities in multiple locations

Partial: Agency offers a partial range of services or provides facilities in a few locations

Limited: Agency offers service through a restricted role or lease with another agency or organization

None: Agency does not offer service or provide facilities.

The first matrix describes parks and recreation facilities. The second summarizes recreation program and service providers.

Table 4.1 below illustrates the existing role each park and recreation facility provider has assumed in Ada County to date.

Table 4.1
Resource Providers
Ada County, Idaho

Park Type	Service Provided by County	Extent to Which County Provides Service	Location of County Facilities	Other Agency Providers Providing Service	Extent to Which Other Agencies Provide Service
Mini Parks	No	None	--	Boise	Partial
Neighborhood Parks	No	None	--	Boise, Meridian, Eagle, Garden City, Kuna, Star	Full
Community Parks	No	None	--	Boise, Meridian, Western Ada Recreation District, Eagle, Garden City, Kuna	Full
Large Urban Parks	No	None	--	Boise, Meridian	Partial
Regional Parks	Yes	Partial	Barber Park	Idaho State Parks, Boise	Partial
Linear Park	Yes	Partial	Greenbelt Bike Path	Boise, Meridian, Garden City, Eagle	Partial
Open Space Areas/Reserves	Yes	Partial (fee, easements, agreements)	Foothills Trail(s) & Seaman Gulch (undeveloped)	BLM, USFS, IFPL, Idaho Fish & Game, Idaho State Parks, Boise, Kuna, Eagle, Trust, Corps., Bureau of Reclamation	Full
Special Use Area					
Sport Field Complex/Playfield	No	Limited (land only)	(Ladybird Park & Boise Hawks Mem. Stadium)	Boise, Eagle, Kuna, School Districts	Full
Indoor Recreation Facilities	No	None	--	Boise, Eagle, Kuna, Star, School Districts, YMCA, Boys & Girls Club	Partial
Festival Areas	No	None	--	Western Idaho Fairground, Boise, Kuna	Partial
Ramps/Marina/Boat Facilities	Yes	Limited (through lease)	Lucky Peak	Corp., Idaho Power, Idaho State Parks	Partial
Rafting/Float Facilities	Yes	Partial	Barber Park	Boise, Idaho Fish & Game	Partial
Golf Course	No	None	--	Boise, Private	Full
Climbing Areas	No	None	--	Bureau of Reclamation	Partial
Urban Plazas	No	None	--	Boise, Meridian, Eagle	Partial
OHV Areas	No	None	--	USFS, BLM	Partial
BMX Areas	No	None	--	Boise, Kuna	Partial
Shooting Facilities	No	None	--	Private	Partial
Campgrounds	No	Limited (land only)	(On the River RV Park)	Idaho State Parks, USFS, BLM	Partial
Skate Areas	Yes	Limited (land only)	Eagle Sports Complex	Boise, Eagle, Meridian, Kuna	Full
Trails	Yes	Partial	Foothills trails, Boise Greenbelt	Boise, BLM, USFS, Idaho Fish & Game	Partial
Equestrian Facilities	Yes	Partial	Foothills trails	Boise, Meridian, Eagle, BLM, USFS, Idaho Fish & Game	Limited
Observation Areas/Waysides	Yes	Partial	Oregon Interpretative Trail	Boise, BLM, Idaho Power, Idaho State Parks, Shakespeare	Partial

Figure 4-1 Existing Park and Recreation Facility Providers

Observations of the Facility Providers Matrix:

In general, park and recreation facilities in Ada County are offered and maintained as a collaborative effort between the County, local cities, schools districts, state agencies, federal organizations and private organizations.

While Ada County and the other municipal agencies continue to increase their presence in providing quality park and recreation facilities, the City of Boise continues to be the most significant provider of park and recreational areas in the Ada County area.

- *The cities of Boise, Meridian, Kuna, Garden City, Eagle and Star all provide local park and recreational facilities (e.g. mini, neighborhood, community and large urban parks). Ada County does not currently provide these services, however it has been suggested that the County could provide technical services to the smaller communities in an effort to provide these types of facilities.*
- *Regional parks are provided by a number of different agencies, including the State of Idaho, the City of Boise and Ada County. Currently, Barber Park is the only Regional Park facility owned and operated by the Ada County.*
- *The Cities of Boise, Meridian, Garden City and Eagle as well as Ada County all provide linear park facilities. Ada County owns and operates roughly seven miles of land (various widths) along the greenbelt.*
- *Multiple agencies provide natural open space/reserves in Ada County. This includes the US Forest Service (USFS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Bureau of Reclamation, Corp of Engineers, Idaho Foundation for Parks and Lands, Idaho Fish & Game, Idaho State Parks, Land Trust of Treasure Valley, the Cities of Boise and Eagle and Ada County. Ada County has easements or license agreements for 13 miles of trails in the foothills. Also, the County owns Seaman Gulch, which once it is developed, will contribute to the open space opportunities in the area.*
- *Special use areas are offered by various agencies. Ada County owns a number of special use areas, however these are leased to private agencies and organizations for their operation.*
- *The Corp. of Engineers, Idaho State Parks, and Ada County provide boating facilities at Luck Peak Lake. Most facilities and ramps are provided through collaborative partnerships.*
- *A combination of motorized and non-motorized trails on the Boise Front are owned by various agencies and managed via a partnership effort. The trail system currently includes over 83 miles of trail.*

Existing Service Providers

Figure E-2 below illustrates the current providers of recreation programs and services. Overall, programs and services are primarily offered by the cities of Boise and Meridian and private organizations (YMCA, Boys & Girls Club, and other private sport organizations). The current roles are shown on the following page:

Table 4.2
Program and Service Providers
 Ada County, Idaho

Recreation Program/ Service Type	Service Provided by County	Extent to Which County Provides Service	Type of County Program	Other Agency Providers Providing Service	Extent to Which Other Agencies Provide Service
Aquatics	No	None	--	College, Boise, Meridian, Private	Partial
Arts, Crafts and Hobbies	No	None	--	College, Boise, Meridian, Boys/Girls Club, YMCA, Private	Partial
Court Sports	No	None	--	College, Boise, Meridian, Boys/Girls Club, YMCA, private	Full
Cultural Arts	No	None	--	College, Boise, Boys/Girls Club, Private	Partial
Dance and Music	No	None	--	College, Boise, Meridian, Boys/Girls Club, YMCA, Senior Centers, Private	Partial
Day Care & Child Care	No	None	--	Boise, Boys/Girls Club, YMCA, Private	Partial
Drama & Thater	No	None	--	College, Boise, Meridian, Boys/Girls Club, YMCA, Private	Partial
Drop In Play/Open Gym	No	None	--	Boise, Meridian, Boys/Girls Club, YMCA, Private	Partial
Environmental Education	Yes	Limited	(Energy conservation)	Boise, Private	Limited
Financial Services	No	None	--	Boise, Senior Centers	Limited
Fitness	No	None	--	College, Boise, Meridian, Boys/Girls Club, YMCA, Private	Full
Golf	No	None	--	Boise, private	Limited
Health & Wellness	No	None	--	Boise, Boys/Girls Club, YMCA, Senior Centers, Private	Partial
Language and Writing	No	None	--	College, Boise, Boys/Girls Club, YMCA	Limited
Legal Assistance	No	None	--	Senior Centers, private	Limited
Nutrition Services	No	None	--	Senior Centers, private	Partial
Organized Sports	No	None	--	College, Boise, Meridian, Boys/Girls Club, YMCA, School Districts, Private	Full
Outdoor Recreation	Yes	Partial	Boating, floating, hiking	Boise, Meridian, BLM, USFS, State, Private	Partial
Senior Services	No	None	--	Senior Centers	Partial
Special Events	Yes	Limited (facility only)	(Foot races, events)	Boise, Meridian, Boys/Girls Club, YMCA, Fairgrounds, Private	Limited
Special Interest Classes	No	None	--	College, Boise, Meridian, Boys/Girls Club, YMCA, Private	Full
Technology	No	None	--	College, Boise, Meridian, Boys/Girls Club, Private	Partial
Transportation (Seniors)	No	None	--	Senior Centers	Partial
Travel and Trips	No	None	--	Boise, Senior Center, Private	Partial

Figure E-2 Existing Park and Recreation Service Providers

Observations of the Program Providers' Matrix:

The primary providers of cultural arts programs in the Ada County area are the Cities of Boise and Meridian and private organizations, such as the Boys and Girls Club, YMCA and private sports groups. Currently, ADA County offers limited recreation programs and services.

4.3 CURRENT LEVEL OF SERVICE

“Level-of-service” refers to the amount a given type of facility or service is provided to residents within a jurisdiction. When applied to park and recreational areas/facilities, the level of service is generally expressed in terms of acres of land per thousand people. This can be applied to the entire inventory or land within individual categories and can be expressed as a ratio of land to people based on the current population or some future population figure.

The “current level” of service in Ada County was derived by dividing the total parkland inventory (expressed in acres) within each category (owned or managed by the County) by the entire 2005 County populations (per 1,000). Below is a summary of the current level of service for each category of park land in Ada County.

REGIONAL PARKS

The County's current level of service for County-owned facilities in this category is 0.19 acres per 1,000 people. Current County facilities are limited to two parks – Lady Brik and Barber Parks. The Hubbard Reservoir also could help serve as a regional park in the future, if facilities were expanded, consistent with land owned and/or leased by the County at that facility. Other facilities in the region include Julia Davis Park, Eagle Island State Park and Discovery Park. In addition, some publicly owned and accessible land could fulfill the same objectives as a regional park would, including land owned by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in the Boise Foothill area and the southern portion of the County.

SPECIAL USE AREAS

The County's current level of service for County-owned facilities in this category is 0.84 acres per 1,000 people. This includes Simplot Sports Complex (which is leased to the City of Boise) and Eagle Sports Complex (which is leased to City of Eagle).

The County also owns the County Fairgrounds complex located in Garden City adjacent to Lady Bird Park. While not used primarily as a recreational facility, the Fairgrounds are used for the Western Idaho Fair each year and for indoor and outdoor special events at other times during the year. The Fairgrounds also incorporates trails and other passive recreational facilities. A Master Plan is being prepared for the Fairgrounds as of the writing of this Plan.

LINEAR PARKS/PATHWAYS AND TRAILS

The County's current level of service for County-owned facilities in this category is 0.16 acres per 1,000 people. County facilities include a combination of county-owned land, easements and license agreements for a total of approximately 31 miles of trails and

greenway along the Boise River, in the Boise Foothills and in other locations in the County. Other facilities in the region include Boise River greenbelt areas within incorporated cities, additional trails in the Boise Foothills owned and managed by other public agencies, trails on private land used by the public, and trails within state parks and on BLM and state reclamation land in other areas of the county.

OPEN SPACE

The County's current level of service for County-owned facilities in this category is 5.11 acres per 1,000 people. This includes county-owned land and/or easements or license agreements for land the following areas:

- Barber Pools (35 acres)
- Smile & Victory Wetlands (5 acres)
- Hidden Hollow Landfill (750 acres)
- Vets Cemetery (80 acres)
- Seaman Gulch (227 acres)
- Hubbard Reservoir (377 acres)

Other open space areas in the region include land in the Boise Foothills owned by the City of Boise and land owned by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), State of Idaho, the US Bureau of Reclamation and other federal agencies. Some of this land could eventually be traded for other land holdings. As noted previously, the BLM owns approximately 192,000 acres of land in Ada County.

4.4 COMMUNITY VISION AND VALUES

Participants in the community meetings held in late November 2005 were asked to review and comment on the vision statement presented at the meetings. Roughly half of the small groups suggested changes to the content and organization of this vision statement. Listed below is the revised vision stated generated from this exercise.

"Growth and development in Ada County are balanced and integrated with protection and management of natural resources. We support diversity, value and protect our cultural and historical heritage, and have access to a variety of choices in how we live, work, learn, play, shop and travel. We enjoy a high quality of life in safe, healthy and clean neighborhoods that we call home."

While this statement applies to the entire County Comprehensive Plan, specific values related to the delivery of park and recreation areas are listed below.

- *"Preservation of and access to high quality open spaces in close proximity to and within the built environment."*
- *"Ada County's diverse recreational resources and opportunities."*
- *"Access to urban amenities, outstanding recreational experiences and quiet rural settings in a County with a small community atmosphere."*

4.5 ADA COUNTY PARK AND OPEN SPACE PLAN SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Role of ADA County

Participants generally agreed that the County's focus should be on development or acquisition of open spaces and/or trails along the Boise River, the Foothills, and/or in similar areas. The County should not focus on building or maintaining developed urban-type recreational facilities, such as indoor sports or aquatic facilities or complexes. It was also recommended the County develop regional facilities that are focused primarily on passive recreational use but may have some active recreational components (e.g., play equipment, shelters and other passive activities.). Other comments included:

- *Adequate facilities may be needed or desired for off-road recreation and other activities, such as rock climbing, hang gliding and roving archery, and others that are not appropriate in urban areas.*
- *The County may work with other agencies to develop or manage facilities on co-owned lands.*

Furthermore, the County expects to focus resources on development, operation and maintenance of new facilities primarily in unincorporated areas of the County. However, it will continue to operate County-owned areas and may partner with other jurisdictions in providing facilities and services in these areas, where opportunities arise.

4.6 SPECIFIC ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Below is a summary of the recommended roles and responsibilities for the Ada County and other recreation providers in the community.

Table 4.3
Roles and Responsibilities
Ada County

	Priority for County to Take the Lead in Providing Service	Service Provided by County	Extent to Which Service is Provided by County	Locations of County Facilities	Other Agency Providers Providing Service	Level of Service Provided by other Agencies
Parks and Facilities						
Mini Parks	Low	No	None	--	Boise	Partial
Neighborhood Parks	Low	No	None	--	Boise, Meridian, Eagle, Garden City, Kuna, Star	Full
Community Parks	Low	No	None	--	Boise, Meridian, Western Ada Recreation District, Eagle, Garden City, Kuna	Full
Large Urban Parks	Low	No	None	--	Boise, Meridian	Partial
Regional Parks	High	Yes	Partial	Barber Park	Idaho State Parks, Boise	Partial
Linear Park	High	Yes	Partial	Greenbelt Bike Path	Boise, Meridian, Garden City, Eagle	Partial
Open Space Areas/Reserves	High	Yes	Partial (fee, easements, agreements)	Foothills Trail(s) & Seaman Gulch (undeveloped)	BLM, USFS, IFPL, Idaho Fish & Game, Idaho State Parks, Boise, Kuna, Eagle, Trust, Corps., Bureau of Reclamation	Full
Special Use Area						
Sport Field Complex/Playfields	Low/Medium	No	Limited (land only)	(Ladybird Park & Boise Hawks Mem. Stadium)	Boise, Eagle, Kuna, School Districts	Full
Indoor Recreation Facilities	Low	No	None	--	Boise, Eagle, Kuna, Star, School Districts, YMCA, Boys & Girls Club	Partial
Festival Areas	Low (except for Fairgrounds)	No	None	--	Western Idaho Fairground, Boise, Kuna	Partial
Ramps/Marina/Boat Fac.	High	Yes	Limited (through lease)	Lucky Peak	Corp., Idaho Power, Idaho State Parks	Partial
Rafting/Float Facilities	High	Yes	Partial	Barber Park	Boise, Idaho Fish & Game	Partial
Golf Course	Low	No	None	--	Boise, Private	Full
Climbing Areas	Medium/High	No	None	--	Bureau of Reclamation	Partial
Urban Plazas	Low	No	None	--	Boise, Meridian, Eagle	Partial
OHV Areas	Medium/High	No	None	--	USFS, BLM	Partial
BMX Areas	Medium	No	None	--	Boise, Kuna	Partial
Shooting Facilities	Medium/High	No	None	--	Private	Partial
Campgrounds	Medium/High	No	Limited (land only)	(On the River RV Park)	Idaho State Parks, USFS, BLM	Partial
Skate Areas	Low	Yes	Limited (land only)	Eagle Sports Complex	Boise, Eagle, Meridian, Kuna	Full
Trails	High	Yes	Partial	Foothills trails, Boise Greenbelt	Boise, BLM, USFS, Idaho Fish & Game	Partial
Equestrian Facilities	High	Yes	Partial	Foothills trails,	Boise, Meridian, Eagle, BLM, USFS, Idaho Fish & Game	Limited
Observation Areas/Waysides	Medium	Yes	Partial	Oregon Interpretative Trail	Boise, BLM, Idaho Power, Idaho State Parks, Shakespeare	Partial
Fishing Areas	Low/Medium	No	None		Boise, BLM, Idaho Power, Idaho State Parks, Shakespeare	Partial

Programs						
Aquatics	Low	No	None	--	College, Boise, Meridian, Private	Partial
Arts, Crafts and Hobbies	Low/Medium	No	None	--	College, Boise, Meridian, Boys/Girls Club, YMCA, Private	Partial
Court Sports	Low	No	None	--	College, Boise, Meridian, Boys/Girls Club, YMCA, private	Full
Cultural Arts	Medium	No	None	--	College, Boise, Boys/Girls Club, Private	Partial
Dance and Music	Low	No	None	--	College, Boise, Meridian, Boys/Girls Club, YMCA, Senior Centers, Private	Partial
Day Care & Child Care	Low	No	None	--	Boise, Boys/Girls Club, YMCA, Private	Partial
Drama & Thater	Low	No	None	--	College, Boise, Meridian, Boys/Girls Club, YMCA, Private	Partial
Drop In Play/Open Gym	Low	No	None	--	Boise, Meridian, Boys/Girls Club, YMCA, Private	Partial
Environmental Education	Medium/High	Yes	Limited	(Energy conservation)	Boise, Private	Limited
Financial Services	Low	No	None	--	Boise, Senior Centers	Limited
Fitness	Low	No	None	--	College, Boise, Meridian, Boys/Girls Club, YMCA, Private	Full
Golf	Low	No	None	--	Boise, private	Limited
Health & Wellness	Low	No	None	--	Boise, Boys/Girls Club, YMCA, Senior Centers, Private	Partial
Instructional Classes	High	Yes	Partial	Boaters Safety	Boise, Meridian, Boys/Girls Club, YMCA, Senior Centers, Private	Full
Language and Writing	Low	No	None	--	College, Boise, Boys/Girls Club, YMCA	Limited
Legal Assistance	Low	No	None	--	Senior Centers, private	Limited
Nutrition Services	Low	No	None	--	Senior Centers, private	Partial
Organized Sports	Low	No	None	--	College, Boise, Meridian, Boys/Girls Club, YMCA, School Districts, Private	Full
Outdoor Recreation	High	Yes	Partial	Boating, floating, hiking	Boise, Meridian, BLM, USFS, State, Private	Partial
Senior Services	Low	No	None	--	Senior Centers	Partial
Special Events	Medium	Yes	Limited (facility only)	(Foot races, events)	Boise, Meridian, Boys/Girls Club, YMCA, Fairgrounds, Private	Limited
Special Interest Classes	Low	No	None	--	College, Boise, Meridian, Boys/Girls Club, YMCA, Private	Full
Technology	Low	No	None	--	College, Boise, Meridian, Boys/Girls Club, Private	Partial
Transportation (seniors)	Low	No	None	--	Senior Centers	Partial
Travel and Trips	Low	No	None	--	Boise, Senior Center, Private	Partial

4.7 GOALS AND POLICIES

(Note: Numbering reflects numbering in Ada County Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 9.)

Overall Goal Statement and Policies

Goal 9.1: *To identify, prioritize, reserve, acquire, develop and maintain a system of recreation areas, including parks, pathways, trailways, greenbelts, open space, playgrounds and other recreation areas and programs.*

Policy 9.1-1: Develop and enhance the variety of uses and enjoyment of Ada County's parks and recreation areas for all age groups.

Policy 9.1-2: Provide accessible recreation opportunities for the disabled, handicapped and other segments of the community with special needs in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Policy 9.1-3: Involve volunteers and citizen support groups in the prioritization, coordination and implementation of recreation programs.

Policy 9.1-4: Support the development of a west Boise River specialty park in unincorporated Ada County that would include a wildlife preserve, nature trails, bird watching and limited river access for boaters.

Policy 9.1-5: Identify opportunities for incorporating recreational uses or facilities in the Western Idaho Fairgrounds and other County-owned facilities.

Policy 9.1-6: Refine and implement a master plan for Barber Park.

Policy 9.1-7: Periodically assess the County's Park and Recreation system for consistency with county level of service standards.

Policy 9.1-8: Adequately fund the maintenance and repair of County Park and Recreation facilities. Ada County will work with the cities to ensure that the application of County zoning ordinance provisions and development review is consistent with city policies for parks and recreation.

Policy 9.1-9: Within existing cities, and their designated Areas of Impact, Ada County goals and policies will be coordinated with the respective cities and those cities' comprehensive plans.

Policy 9.1-10: Provide a wide range of recreational services including non-traditional services such as boat docks, off-trail BMX and or mountain biking opportunities, archery ranges, gun club, equestrian trails, wildlife viewing areas/sanctuaries, etc. consistent with demand for such facilities by County residents and the ability of the County and partnering agencies or groups to finance them.

Park Facilities and Acquisition Goal Statement and Policies

Goal 9.2: *Support public recreation opportunities by acquiring and developing new parks and recreation areas, land or facilities consistent with identified community goals and priorities.*

- Policy 9.2-1 Consider new development, highway improvements, and changes of land use as potential opportunities to:*
- a. Acquire open space, greenways, bicycle paths and pedestrian linkages between parks, schools and communities.*
 - b. Negotiate for the acquisition or dedication of park sites using such incentives as density bonuses and transfers.*
 - c. Utilize impact fees for acquisition and development of county green infrastructure.*
- Policy 9.2-2: Encourage the increased use of existing parks in the County through public awareness programs.*
- Policy 9.2-3: Develop maintenance standards for County parks to ensure their continued value to residents.*
- Policy 9.2-4: Coordinate park and recreation planning with Boise, Canyon and Elmore Counties, cities in Ada County and state and federal agencies such as the BLM, US Forest Service and the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation (IDPR).*
- Policy 9.2-5: Promote the continuation of the Boise River Greenbelt throughout Ada County through private dedication, public acquisition and other appropriate measures.*
- Policy 9.2-6: Support the location of new parks adjacent to school recreation facilities.*
- Policy 9.2-7: Provide opportunities to partner and share costs with municipalities within Ada County on acquiring land for open space, parks and trails.*
- Policy 9.2-8: Require review and comment by the County Parks and Waterways Department on any new development to improve coordination and connection with neighboring open space, parks and trails amenities.*

Pathway and Trail Goal Statement and Policies

Goal 9.3: *Develop and implement a long-range plan for the acquisition, creation and maintenance of new and existing pathways and trails that form an interconnected system; incorporate recommendations from the Ridge-to-Rivers Pathway Plan into the County’s plan, as well as other adopted local, state and federal trails plans.*

- Policy 9.3-1: Evaluate all development requests to determine their consistency with the County’s Plan and the Ridge-to-Rivers Pathways Plan.*
- Policy 9.3-2: Support acquisition, preservation and maintenance of trails and trailheads through a variety of means, such as but not limited to private donations, targeted land acquisitions, environmental protection regulations and volunteer efforts.*
- Policy 9.3-3: Coordinate with Idaho Power in the development of a Snake River Canyon linear pathway plan for non-motorized recreational opportunities that maintains the natural environment.*
- Policy 9.3-4: Support the coordination of bicycle pathway system with transportation programs, agricultural/irrigation projects and other applicable plans or programs. Continue to pursue public access easement agreements with utility and pipeline companies. Encourage responsible agencies to obtain*

permission and authorization from property owners and authorities who control and manage lands on which pathways and trails are proposed prior to construction of pathways and trails.

- Policy 9.3-5: Continue to utilize volunteers and the Sheriff's Inmate Labor Detail in maintaining, building and monitoring trails.*
- Policy 9.3-6: Coordinate and collaborate at the staff level with other entities involved in updating and implementing the Ridge to Rivers Plan.*
- Policy 9.3-7: Recognize and coordinate with those agencies participating in the Foothills Management Plan to continue to properly manage and maintain foothills trails and resource values identified in this plan and the APA Ridge-to-Rivers Pathway Plan.*
- Policy 9.3-8: Continue to provide administrative and financial support for the Ridge-to-Rivers pathway program in the Boise Foothills*

Parks and Open Space Goal Statement and Policies

Goal 9.4: ***Ada County supports coordination among the County, cities, state and federal agencies and private entities to provide a full range of recreational opportunities to County residents.***

- Policy 9.4-1: Coordinate open space programs in Ada County with those of the incorporated cities and Planned Communities of Ada County, as well as with other regional agencies and jurisdictions that are involved in open space programs.*
- Policy 9.4-2: Support the acquisition of park sites sufficiently in advance of development to keep costs down.*
- Policy 9.4-3: Support preservation of open space and natural areas for open space through a variety of means such as but not limited to private donations, targeted land acquisitions, environmental protection regulations, or development mitigation measures such as conservation easements and development easements.*
- Policy 9.4-4: Encourage new development to provide for parks and open space through acquisition, dedication, or impact fees, if adopted.*
- Policy 9.4-5: Use parks and open space to provide green area between land uses.*
- Policy 9.4-6: Designate appropriate parks and open space as compatible land uses in environmentally or historically sensitive areas.*
- Policy 9.4-7: Coordinate school and park development to complement each other.*
- Policy 9.4-8: Continue to implement and refine Ada County's Parks and Recreation Plan. Update the plan approximately every five years.*
- Policy 9.4-9: Encourage local jurisdictions to develop and adopt Park and Recreation System Plans for serving the parks and recreation needs of existing and future residents living in Areas of City Impact.*
- Policy 9.4-10: County Parks Department shall review County development applications to ensure proposed development conforms to the adopted Comprehensive Parks, Recreation and Waterways System Plan.*

Waterways Goal Statement and Policies

Goal 9.5: *To increase access to, safety on and enjoyment of County Waterways through education about safety, rules and laws, and by providing additional facilities and services.*

- Policy 9.5-1: Continue to maintain and improve boating facilities throughout Ada County, such as parking, launch ramps, and restrooms.*
- Policy 9.5-2: Provide accessible recreation opportunities for the disabled, handicapped, and other segments of the community with special needs in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.*
- Policy 9.5-3: Adequately fund the maintenance and repair of County waterways facilities to ensure their continued value to residents.*
- Policy 9.5-4: Coordinate waterways planning with surrounding counties and agencies.*
- Policy 9.5-5: Encourage federal, state, and private water managers to recognize and support recreational boating and fishing on Lucky Peak, Swan Falls and the Snake and Boise rivers.*
- Policy 9.5-6: Create and/or expand facilities for overnight camping and day-use boater facilities associated with waterway recreation.*
- Policy 9.5-7: Encourage ACHD, ITD, cities and other public entities to provide public access to the Boise River at roads, bridges, or public rights-of-ways.*
- Policy 9.5-8: Support and advocate for management of the lower Boise River (Glenwood Rd. to the Canyon County line) as an advanced paddle sport recreation area i.e. canoe, kayak, and advanced rafting. Barber Park to Ann Morrison Park should be managed for less experienced floaters. This section of the river that traverses Garden City will be targeted for few improvements.*
- Policy 9.5-9: Encourage creation of man-made boating lakes from reclaimed gravel pits and quarries to serve niche boaters.*
- Policy 9.5-10: Balance recreational needs with private property rights in promoting waterway recreation and improvements.*
- Policy 9.5-11: Help increase boat registration designations to Ada County through public education efforts.*
- Policy 9.5-12: Support efforts to secure new boat and recreation revenue source(s) to fill gaps left by elimination of federal funding sources.*
- Policy 9.5-13: Continue to support enforcement and search and rescue efforts provided by the Ada County Sheriff's Office and local volunteers.*

CHAPTER 5

NEEDS ASSESSMENT & LEVEL OF SERVICE STANDARDS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Ada County currently has approximately 2,273 acres of developed parkland and 21.73 miles of developed trails. These facilities are primarily located along the Boise River corridor or along the Boise Foothills.

The current park holdings in Ada County are defined as regional parks, special use areas/parks, linear parks, natural open space and trails. The County currently has no parkland holdings in the mini, neighborhood, community or large urban categories. Refer to Chapter 2 for a detailed description of the park and recreation areas.

Table 5.1
Current Level of Service (LOS) for Parkland
Ada County, Idaho

Type	Level of Service ⁽¹⁾
Mini Parks	None
Neighborhood Parks	None
Community Parks	None
Large Urban Parks	None
Regional Parks	0.19
Special Use Areas	0.84
Linear Parks	0.16
Open Space Areas	5.11
TOTAL	6.30

⁽¹⁾ Expressed in acres per 1,000 population

Currently, Ada County does not have an adopted a Level of Service (LOS) requirement for park and recreation services. The LOS standards identified above are based on the current inventory of land expressed in terms of acres per 1,000 people.

5.2 PARK LAND NEEDS

The county's need for park services (e.g. land, facilities and programs) is based on the community's preferences and through a comparison and assessment of standards, goals and policies reviewed by the planning sub-committee. From this information, various levels of service (LOS) for each type of park/recreation area are derived. "Level-of-service" typically refers to the amount of a given type of facility or service residents are provided on average.

MINI PARK LAND NEEDS

Currently, there are no County owned parks of this type. These types of park areas are usually found in "urban" environments, in areas where large available parcels of land are scarce and/or as amenities in private developments.

The advisory committee indicated that the County's involvement in the provision of mini-parks should be a low priority.

Level of Service Standard:

Table 5.2
Recommended Level of Service (LOS) for Mini-Parks
 Ada County, Idaho

	Current LOS	LOS – Tier I (County)	LOS – Tier II (Planned Communities)	LOS – Tier (Area of Impact)
Service Level (expressed in acres per 1,000 population)	None	None	0.25-0.75	⁽³⁾
Current Need (expressed in Acres) ⁽¹⁾	None	NA	--	--
Future Need (expressed in Acres) ⁽²⁾	None	NA	--	--
NET Current Need (Expressed in Acres)	None	NA	--	--
NET Future Need (Expressed in Acres)	None	NA	--	--

⁽¹⁾ Based on 2005 ADA County population of 361,484

⁽²⁾ Based on 2025 ADA County population of 516,773

⁽³⁾ Refer to local jurisdiction for adopted level of service standards for this area

County (outside area of impact)

- Based on the service area and cost of service (acquisition, development and maintenance), it is suggested that the County generally not be involved in the development or maintenance of this type of park. The acquisition of specific mini park sites may be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. However, the County should encourage the development of privately owned and maintained mini-parks in subdivisions and multi-family developments.

Planned Communities

- *In planned communities outside the cities area of impact, mini park land may be accepted by the County as long as it meets specific development standards and mechanisms are in place for their development and ongoing maintenance. In all other areas, a park impact fees could be considered as an alternative to land dedication.*
- *The Advisory Committee agreed with the County staff’s recommendation of an overall standard of 10 acres per 1,000 people for developed parkland within Planned Communities. A range within each subcategory is recommended to provide flexibility among different planned communities to reflect unique conditions and needs of residents.*

Area of Impact

- *For developments within an area of impact, the County should refer to the local jurisdiction for an adopted level of service standard.*

NEIGHBORHOOD PARK LAND NEEDS

Currently, there are no County owned parks of this type. Similar to mini-parks, these types of park areas are generally found in “urban” environments. These are usually concentrated within the existing incorporated areas, with the exception of a few sites located within the Boise area of impact. All of the local jurisdictions (e.g. Boise, Meridian, Eagle, Garden City, Kuna, and Star) to varying degree provide these types of facilities.

At the public meetings, there was limited support for the development of “local parks” (e.g. neighborhood and community parks) within the unincorporated areas as well as within the smaller communities. “Local parks” only received moderate support when asked what was most needed in Ada County. The advisory committee indicated that the County’s responsibility in the provision of neighborhood parks should be a low priority.

Level of Service Standards:

Table 5.3
Recommended Level of Service (LOS) for Neighborhood Parks
 Ada County, Idaho

	Current LOS	LOS – Tier I (County)	LOS – Tier II (Planned Communities)	LOS – Tier (Area of Impact)
Service Level (expressed in acres per 1,000 population)	None	None	1.0-3.0	⁽³⁾
Current Need (expressed in Acres) ⁽¹⁾	None	NA	--	--
Future Need (expressed in Acres) ⁽²⁾	None	NA	--	--
NET Current Need (Expressed in Acres)	None	NA	--	--
NET Future Need (Expressed in Acres)	None	NA	--	--

⁽¹⁾ Based on 2005 ADA County population of 361,484
⁽²⁾ Based on 2025 ADA County population of 516,773
⁽³⁾ Refer to local jurisdiction for adopted level of service standards for this area

County (outside area of impact)

- *Based on the service area and cost of service (acquisition, development and maintenance), it is suggested that the County generally not be involved in the development or maintenance of this type of park. The acquisition of specific neighborhood park sites by the County may be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.*

Planned Communities

- *In planned communities outside the City's Area of Impact, neighborhood park land may be accepted by the County as long as it meets specific development standards and there are mechanisms are in place for their development and ongoing maintenance. In all other areas, a park impact fees should be considered as alternative to land dedication.*
- *The Advisory Committee agreed with the County staff's recommendation of an overall standard of 10 acres per 1,000 people for developed parkland within Planned Communities. A range within each subcategory is recommended to provide flexibility among different planned communities to reflect unique conditions and needs of residents.*

Area of Impact

- *For developments within an area of impact, the County should refer to the local jurisdiction for an adopted level of service standard.*

COMMUNITY PARK LAND NEEDS

Currently, there are no County owned parks of this type. Like other “urban park types”, these types of park areas are typically found in “urban” environments or on the fringe areas of smaller incorporated communities. With the exception of Star, all of the local jurisdictions (e.g. Boise, Meridian, Eagle, Garden City and Kuna) provide these types of facilities. In addition, the Western Ada County Recreation District owns one community park facility in the Meridian area.

At the public meetings, there was limited support for the development of “local parks” (e.g. neighborhood and community parks) within the unincorporated areas as well as within the smaller communities. “Local parks” received moderate support when asked what was most needed in Ada County. The advisory committee indicated that the County’s responsibility in the provision of community parks should be a low priority.

Level of Service Standards:

Table 5.4
Recommended Level of Service (LOS) for Community Parks
 Ada County, Idaho

	Current LOS	LOS – Tier I (County)	LOS – Tier II (Planned Communities)	LOS – Tier (Area of Impact)
Service Level (expressed in acres per 1,000 population)	None	None	1.0-3.0	⁽³⁾
Current Need (expressed in Acres) ⁽¹⁾	None	NA	--	--
Future Need (expressed in Acres) ⁽²⁾	None	NA	--	--
NET Current Need (Expressed in Acres)	None	NA	--	--
NET Future Need (Expressed in Acres)	None	NA	--	--

⁽¹⁾ Based on 2005 ADA County population of 361,484

⁽²⁾ Based on 2025 ADA County population of 516,773

⁽³⁾ Refer to local jurisdiction for adopted level of service standards for this area

County (outside area of impact)

- Based on the service area and cost of service (acquisition, development and maintenance), it is suggested that the County generally not be involved in the development or maintenance of this type of park area. The acquisition of specific community park sites by the County may be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Planned Communities

- In planned communities outside the City's areas of impact, community park land may be accepted by the County as long as it meets specific development standards and mechanisms are in place for their development and ongoing maintenance. In all other areas, a park impact fees should be considered as alternative to land dedication.
- The Advisory Committee agreed with the County staff's recommendation of an overall standard of 10 acres per 1,000 people for developed parkland within Planned Communities. A range within each subcategory is recommended to provide flexibility among different planned communities to reflect unique conditions and needs of residents.

Area of Impact

- For developments within an area of impact, the County should refer to the local jurisdiction for an adopted level of service standard.

LARGE URBAN PARK LAND NEEDS

Currently, there are no County owned large urban parks. This type of park area is generally considered to be an "urban" type of park area and is normally found in incorporated areas. Only a few of the local jurisdictions (e.g. Boise and Meridian) provide these types of facilities. These are located within the city limits as well as within the Area of Impact.

At the public meetings, there was limited support for the development of “large urban/district parks in unincorporated areas”. The advisory committee indicated that the County’s responsibility in the provision of large urban parks should be a low priority.

Level of Service Standards:

Table 5.5
Recommended Level of Service (LOS) for Large Urban Parks
 Ada County, Idaho

	Current LOS	LOS – Tier I (County)	LOS – Tier II (Planned Communities)	LOS – Tier (Area of Impact)
Service Level (expressed in acres per 1,000 population)	None	None	1.0-3.0	⁽³⁾
Current Need (expressed in Acres) ⁽¹⁾	None	NA	--	--
Future Need (expressed in Acres) ⁽²⁾	None	NA	--	--
NET Current Need (Expressed in Acres)	None	NA	--	--
NET Future Need (Expressed in Acres)	None	NA	--	--

⁽¹⁾ Based on 2005 ADA County population of 361,484

⁽²⁾ Based on 2025 ADA County population of 516,773

⁽³⁾ Refer to local jurisdiction for adopted level of service standards for this area

County (outside area of impact)

- Based on the service area and cost of service (acquisition, development and maintenance), it is suggested that the County not be involved in the development or maintenance of this type of park area. The acquisition of specific large urban park sites may be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Planned Communities

- In planned communities outside the City’s areas of impact, community park land may be dedicated to the County as long as it meets specific development standards and mechanisms are in place for their development and ongoing maintenance. In all other areas, a fee in-lieu of or park impact fees should be considered as alternative to land dedication.
- The Advisory Committee agreed with the County staff’s recommendation of an overall standard of 10 acres per 1,000 people for developed parkland within Planned Communities. A range within each subcategory is recommended to provide flexibility among different planned communities to reflect unique conditions and needs of residents.

Area of Impact

- For developments within an area of impact, the County should refer to the local jurisdiction for an adopted level of service standard.

REGIONAL PARK LAND NEEDS

Ada County currently owns one regional park facility (Barber Park). The City of Boise and Idaho State Parks also provide regional park facilities such as Julia Davis Park and Eagle Island State Park.

At the public meetings, there was moderate to high support for the development of “regional parks serving the entire County”. The advisory committee indicated that the provision of regional parks should be a high priority for the County.

Level of Service Standard:

Table 5.6
Recommended Level of Service (LOS) for Regional Parks
Ada County, Idaho

	Current LOS	LOS – Tier I (County)	LOS – Tier II (Planned Communities)	LOS – Tier (Area of Impact)
Service Level (expressed in acres per 1,000 population)	0.19	5.00	(3)	(4)
Current Need (expressed in Acres) ⁽¹⁾	0	1,807.4	NA	NA
Future Need (expressed in Acres) ⁽²⁾	98.2	2,583.9	NA	NA
NET Current Need (Expressed in Acres)	0	1,740.2	NA	NA
NET Future Need (Expressed in Acres)	31.0	2,516.7	NA	NA

⁽¹⁾ Based on 2005 ADA County population of 361,484

⁽²⁾ Based on 2025 ADA County population of 516,773

⁽³⁾ Same as LOS – Tier I (County)

⁽⁴⁾ Refer to local jurisdiction for level of service standards for this area

County (outside area of impact) & Planned Communities

- Average for comparable communities was 4.75 acres/1,000 population. The Advisory Committee members recommended a standard higher than this average, rather than at the low end of the range of standards for comparable jurisdictions. A standard higher than 5.0 acres per thousand people is not recommended for the following reasons:
 - * Other existing facilities or lands in the region also help meet regional park needs. If included in the inventory of regional park facilities, they will reduce the need for future County-owned or operated facilities.
 - * The proposed standard is already significant higher than the existing level-of-serve (by a factor of almost 20). Achieving even the proposed standard will require a significant ramp-up for the County in terms of financial and staff capacity. Going to an even higher standard does not seem feasible in the consultant’s professional judgment.
 - * Cost implications related to acquisition and even more importantly, future operation and maintenance are significant for the proposed standard. Again, recommending an even higher standard does not appear feasible, given lack of an existing, stable funding source to cover these costs.

- *If 2,000 acres were acquired at Swan Falls and Rocky Canyon (east and west) sites and additional acreage (500+ acres) were acquired at Hubbard Reservoir, a total of roughly 2,500 additional acres would be needed. If this acreage is added to existing inventory of 67.16 acres and divided by the 2025 population, a **suggested level of service of 5.00 acres per 1,000 population** can be derived. If this LOS is applied to the 2005 population, there is an existing need for 1,807 acres of regional parkland, which is about 1,740 acres more than what currently exists. Hubbard Reservoir contains 377 acres of land.*
- *It was suggested that additional regional parks facilities be dispersed throughout the County. Some potential locations for future regional park facilities include:*
 - * *Swan Falls (through a partnership with Idaho Power Company)*
 - * *Rocky Canyon (east and west)*
 - * *Hubbard Reservoir (County owns/leases 377 undeveloped acres at this location)*
 - * *Eagle Island State Park (through a partnership with Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation – 585 Acres)*
 - * *Celebration Park (through partnership with Canyon County) Note: located outside Ada County.*
- *The Advisory Committee agreed with the County staff's recommendation of an overall standard of 10 acres per 1,000 people for developed parkland within Planned Communities.*

Area of Impact

- *For developments within an area of impact, the County should refer to the local jurisdiction for an adopted level of service standard. However, the County also may adopt its own level-of-service standard for selected areas if opportunities for development of county facilities in these areas arise*

SPECIAL USE FACILITY/AREA LAND NEEDS

Currently, Ada County owns several special use facilities, including three sports complexes, the Western Idaho Fairgrounds, the Boise Hawks Stadium, the Les Bois Horse Racing Park and On the River RV Racing Park. All of these facilities are leased and privately operated by other agencies or organizations. All of the local jurisdictions (e.g. Boise, Meridian, Eagle, Garden City, Kuna, and Star) to varying degree provide these types of facilities. All of these areas are located within existing incorporated areas.

At the public meetings, there were no comments related to the need for special use facilities. Although the committee did not prioritize this type of facility overall, they did identify it as a potential need within the County. Facilities, such as a shooting areas, off-highway vehicles (OHV) areas, campground, etc. that are generally not provided by local city agencies due to their size requirements and proximity to urban populations should be provided by County, State and private organizations.

Level of Service Standards:

Table 5.7
Recommended Level of Service (LOS) for Special Use Areas
 Ada County, Idaho

	Current LOS	LOS – Tier I (County)	LOS – Tier II (Planned Communities)	LOS – Tier (Area of Impact)
Service Level (expressed in acres per 1,000 population)	0.84	1.22	1.0-2.0	⁽³⁾
Current Need (expressed in Acres) ⁽¹⁾	0	441.0	361.5-723.0	NA
Future Need (expressed in Acres) ⁽²⁾	434.1	630.5	516.8-1,033.5	NA
NET Current Need (Expressed in Acres)	0	137.0	57.7-419.0	NA
NET Future Need (Expressed in Acres)	130.1	326.5	212.8-729.5	⁽⁴⁾

⁽¹⁾ Based on 2005 ADA County population of 361,484

⁽²⁾ Based on 2025 ADA County population of 516,773

⁽³⁾ Refer to local jurisdiction for level of service standards for this area

County (outside area of impact)

- Average for comparable communities was 1.48 acres/1,000 population. The recommended standard for special use areas is reasonable close to the average for comparable communities.
- Based on the direction from the park and open space subcommittee, it is suggested that County continue to provide some limited types special use facilities to its residents. These would include the following:
 - * Additional sports or field complex sites (e.g. Kuna/south Meridian area, Star area) – 2 locations @ 50 acres each
 - * Additional Boise River access points (complete 4-5 mile interval of public access) – 2 additional locations @ 5 acres each
 - * Additional Snake River access points (conceptually located 4-5 mile intervals) – 3 locations @ 10 acres each
 - * Shooting area for small bore, large bore, skeet and trap and archery range. – 1 area @ 75 acres
 - * Campgrounds - 3 areas @ 20 acres each
 - * OHV area – 1 area @ 75 acres
 - * Extreme sports area – 1 area @ 20 acres
- In order to provide some limited additional special use areas, roughly 270 acres would be needed. If this acreage is added to the existing inventory of 259 acres and divided by the 2025 population, a **suggested level of service of 1.22 acres per 1,000 population** can be derived. If this LOS is applied to the 2005 population, there is an existing need for 441.01 acres of linear parkland, which is about 182.01 acres more than what now exists.

- *It was suggested that additional special use parks facilities be developed throughout the County. Some potential locations for future special use areas include:*
 - * *Black Creek (Shooting area)*
 - * *Reynolds Creek (OHV area)*
 - * *Luck Peak Reservoir (Campground & Marina)*

Planned Communities

- *The Advisory Committee agreed with the County staff's recommendation of an overall standard of 10 acres per 1,000 people for developed parkland within Planned Communities. A range of 1.0-2.0 acres per 1,000 population in this category is recommended to provide flexibility among different planned communities to reflect unique conditions and needs of residents.*

Area of Impact

- *For developments within an area of impact, the County should refer to the local jurisdiction for an adopted level of service standard.*

LINEAR PARK LAND NEEDS

Currently, the County owns 58 acres of linear park land along or near the Boise River. There are over 10 miles of paved greenbelt trails within the linear park. Several of the local jurisdictions (e.g. Boise, Meridian, Eagle and Garden City) also provide these types of facilities.

While there were no specific comments regarding the need for linear parks at the public meetings, there were several comments related to the provision of trails and pathways. These are often the primary component of linear parks. There also was relatively strong support for the County to provide open space adjacent to rivers and streams. "County Wide Trail System" received strong support when asked what was most needed in Ada County. The advisory committee indicated that the provision of linear parks (e.g. trail corridors) should be a high priority for the County.

Level of Service Standards:

Table 5.8
Recommended Level of Service (LOS) for Linear Parks
 Ada County, Idaho

	Current LOS	LOS – Tier I (County)	LOS – Tier II (Planned Communities)	LOS – Tier (Area of Impact)
Service Level				
(expressed in Miles/1,000 population)	0.03	0.16	NA	(3)
(expressed in Acres/1,000 population)	0.16	0.46	0.0-1.0	(3)
Current Need				
(expressed in Miles) ⁽¹⁾	0	57.8	NA	NA
(expressed in Acres) ⁽¹⁾	0	166.3	0.0-361.5	NA
Future Need				
(expressed in Miles) ⁽²⁾	15.5	82.7	NA	NA
(expressed in Acres) ⁽²⁾	82.7	237.7	0.0-516.8	NA
NET Current Need				
(expressed in Miles)	0	48.27	NA	NA
(expressed in Acres)	0	112.3	0.0-303.5	NA
NET Future Need				
(expressed in Miles)	5.9	73.7	NA	NA
(expressed in Acres)	24.7	183.7	0.0-458	NA

⁽¹⁾ Based on 2005 ADA County population of 361,484

⁽²⁾ Based on 2025 ADA County population of 516,773

⁽³⁾ Refer to local jurisdiction for level of service standards for this area

County (outside area of impact)

- Average for comparable communities was 0.38 acres/1,000. Advisory Committee members generally agreed that this standard appears to be appropriate based on comparison with other areas and recognizing that a significant amount of greenway and trail areas are already owned and/or provided within other areas of the County.
- In order to provide a system of linear corridors that would be inter-connected and encircle or “loop” through the County, roughly 61 miles of linear park would be needed. At an average width of 25 feet, roughly 184.9 acres would be needed. If this acreage is added to existing inventory of 58 acres and divided by the 2025 population, a **suggested level of service of 0.46 acres per 1,000 population** can be derived. If this LOS is applied to the 2005 population, there is an existing need for 166.3 acres of linear parkland, which is about 112.28 acres more than what now exists.

- *It was suggested that additional linear parks include:*
 - * *Boise River Greenway (unincorporated areas)*
 - * *Snake River*
 - * *Boise and North Foothills areas*
 - * *Additional north-south connections*
 - * *Scenic byway connections*
 - * *Lucky Peak Reservoir*

Planned Communities

- *The Advisory Committee agreed with the County staff’s recommendation of an overall standard of 10 acres per 1,000 people for developed parkland within Planned Communities. A range of 0.0-1.0 acres per 1,000 within this category is recommended to provide flexibility among different planned communities to reflect unique conditions and needs of residents.*

Area of Impact

- *For developments within an area of impact, the County should refer to the local jurisdiction for an adopted level of service standard.*

NATURAL OPEN SPACE AREA LAND NEEDS

The County currently owns or leases over 1,847.1 acres of natural open space land. Multiple federal, state and local jurisdictions (e.g. BLM, BR, USFS, IFPL, IFG, ISP, Boise, Eagle, Kuna and the local land trust) to a varying degree provide these types of facilities as well.

There was strong support for the County to acquire natural open space/reserves. “Open space/reserves” received strong support when asked what was most needed in Ada County. The committee indicated that the preservation/conservation of natural open space areas should be a high priority for the County.

Level of Service Standards:

Table 5.9
Recommended Level of Service (LOS) for Natural Open Space
 Ada County, Idaho

	Current LOS	LOS – Tier I (County)	LOS – Tier II (Planned Communities)	LOS – Tier (Area of Impact)
Service Level (expressed in acres per 1,000 population)	5.11	4.0-5.0	(3)	(4)
Current Need (expressed in Acres) ⁽¹⁾	0	1,445.9-1,807.4	NA	NA
Future Need (expressed in Acres) ⁽²⁾	1,847.2	2047.1-2,583.9	NA	NA
NET Current Need (Expressed in Acres)	0	0	NA	NA
NET Future Need (Expressed in Acres)	2,640.7	200.6-737.4	NA	NA

⁽¹⁾ Based on 2005 ADA County population of 361,484

⁽²⁾ Based on 2025 ADA County population of 516,773

⁽²⁾ Same as LOS – Tier I (County)

⁽⁴⁾ Refer to local jurisdiction for level of service standards for this area

⁽⁵⁾ Equivalent to 9.65 Acres per 1,000 based on an average of 4 dwelling units per gross acre.

County (outside area of impact)

- Based on the input from the general public and subsequent direction from the park and open space subcommittee, it is suggested that County continue to preserve or provide natural open space areas for its residents.
- Average for comparable communities was 4.42 acres/1,000 population. Advisory Committee members recommended a lower standard than for Spokane County (9.62 Acres per 1,000 Population) for the following reasons:
 - * There is a significant amount of land within the County owned by local, state and federal agencies (hundreds of thousands of acres). Much of this land can be expected to continue to be used primarily as open space.
 - * Regional parks described previously will help meet open space needs.
 - * Open space provided through Planned Community requirements also will help meet open space needs in unincorporated areas.
- It was suggested that additional open space areas include:
 - * Central and North Foothills
 - * Areas adjacent to state and federal land to provide additional buffer areas
 - * Land adjacent to riparian areas, along ridgelines, near special geographic or historical sites or features and in floodplains
 - * Eastern portions of County between railroad and county line.
- While a County standard of 4 - 5 acres of open space per 1,000 people is recommended in this Plan, other similar counties in some portions of the western U.S., particularly Colorado have much higher standards, in some cases as high as 50 acres per thousand people. In Ada County, a significantly higher standard could be achieved in one of several ways:
 - * Consider other publicly owned and managed open spaces (e.g., land owned by the Idaho Parks, BLM and others) in calculating open space. This would significantly increase the calculated level-of-service for open space.
 - * Incorporate regulations that protect selected sensitive environmental resources and areas from development and conserve them as open space (e.g., steep slopes, flood plains, riparian areas, etc.). Again, protecting and incorporating these areas in calculations of an open space level of service would provide the ability to significantly increase such standards.
 - * Adopt a well-coordinated, county-wide open space acquisition or conservation program. Consideration of such a program has been identified as an implementation measure in this Plan and the County's updated Comprehensive Plan. A stable funding mechanism and regional approach to planning and land acquisition would be needed to achieve this goal.

If the County decides to and initiates efforts to pursue any of these approaches, the recommended level-of-service standards for open space identified in this plan can be revisited and updated. Until that time, a more modest standard is recommended.

Planned Communities

- The County has developed minimum standards for natural open space land within planned communities as well as guidelines for various types of residential communities based on environmental sensitivity. These are identified on the following page:

Guidelines (recommended and reviewed on project-by-project basis by staff/commissioners for Planned Communities and other future development)

Types of Residential Community	Recommended Minimum Total Natural Open Space ⁽¹⁾	Minimum Required Developed Open Space
Conservation/Preservation	30% of gross acreage	10 acres per 1,000 population
Foothill/Hillside	30% of gross acreage	10 acres per 1,000 population
Wetland/Floodplain	25% of gross acreage	10 acres per 1,000 population
Golf/Resort	15% of gross acreage	10 acres per 1,000 population
Flatland	10% of gross acreage	10 acres per 1,000 population
Mixed Use Village	5% of gross acreage	10 acres per 1,000 population
Office/Industrial/Major Retail	0% of gross acreage	10% of gross acreage

(1) *Unbuildable acreages will not automatically be credited to the Natural Open Space minimum requirement as defined as ridgelines and slopes in excess of 25% and/or wetlands, floodways, and waterway buffers. A portion of such lands may be credited based on further evaluation by County staff.*

Note: Some categories of Planned Communities are currently not defined in the County's zoning ordinance. Establishing a definition will be necessary to implement the standards identified in this table.

Area of Impact

- *For developments within an area of impact, the County should refer to the local jurisdiction for an adopted level of service standard.*

5.3 LEVEL OF SERVICE STANDARDS

Illustrated below is a summary of the County’s recommended standards for developed open space “parks” and natural open space. Combined, the standard for these two classifications would generate a level of service of 20 acres per 1,000 population. Within this context, it is suggested that the allocation be distributed between the various park types as follows:

Table 5.10
Summary of Recommended Level of Service (LOS) for Parkland
 Ada County, Idaho

Type	Tier I (County) Level of Service ⁽¹⁾	Tier II (Planned Communities) Level of Service ⁽¹⁾
Mini Parks		0.25-0.75
Neighborhood Parks		1.0-3.0
Community Parks		1.0-3.0
Large Urban Parks		1.0-3.0
Regional Parks	4.0	4.0
Special Use Areas	1.22	0-1.0
Linear Parks	0.46	1.0-3.0
Open Space Areas	2.0-4.0	2.0-4.0
TOTAL	10.0	20.0

⁽¹⁾ Expressed in acres per 1,000 population

5.4 RECREATION PROGRAM NEEDS

In Comprehensive Plan public meetings, recreation programs received a relatively low priority. Advisory Committee members recommended the County offer programs and services in selected areas. Areas with the highest priority include: outdoor recreation, environmental education, special events and instructional classes (boater education, safety, etc.). Additional programs and services (e.g., wildflower hikes, wildfire education, canoe and kayaking classes) could be provided through the development of new additional regional and special use areas (shooting area, BMX area, OHV, campgrounds, etc.).

CHAPTER 6

PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Based on recreation demand (see Chapter 3), suggested roles and responsibilities (see Chapter 4) and needs assessment and level of service standards (see Chapter 5), Ada County's need for parks and recreation facilities are extensive. This chapter of the report discusses recommendations for meeting these needs. Plan recommendations have been divided into the following categories: Parkland; Recreation Programs/Services; and Operation/Management.

6.2 PARKLAND RECOMMENDATIONS

PLANNING CONCEPT

The corner stone of the proposed park and open space system for Ada County is centered on the "regional park". These large, multi-faceted parks will take advantage of their unique surroundings (e.g. water frontage, etc.) and be geographically dispersed throughout the County to ensure they are located with reasonable driving distance of most residents. These areas will provide the basic active and passive and recreational opportunities within the County. Supplementing these parks will be a series of specialized recreation areas (provided through partnerships and or lease arrangements), linear parks for trail systems and open space areas that serve the entire County.

More specifically, the plan is intended to achieve the following:

- **Preserve Park Land.** *Much of the County's undeveloped land is being consumed for housing and other uses. In order to maintain the quality of life in Ada County, it will be essential to acquire key regional and specialized park lands before development occurs and the opportunity is lost.*
- **Complete the Boise River Greenway.** *The Boise River Greenway is one of the most heavily used recreational waterway corridors in the County. Within the unincorporated areas of the County between the County lines to the east and west, Ada County has identified completion of trail corridor connections as a high priority.*
- **Preserve Open Space.** *Much of the County's open space is being consumed for housing and other uses. Similar to the issues with securing additional parkland, it will be essential to identify key open space resources and plan for their conservation before or as development occurs. Ada County is just one potential participant in preserving and maintaining open space for its citizens. It is important for the County to work with cities, state and federal land managers, recreational interest groups and other citizens to identify long-term regional needs and priorities for open space acquisition. It also is essential that these groups collaborate to develop and adopt a long-term, stable, publicly*

supported funding strategy and specific tools to meet these needs. To some extent, this can be accomplished by requiring provision of passive open space through the development permitting and approval process in Planned Communities and other areas.

- **Trail and Open Space Linkages.** Linking trails and open space areas is important for providing a network of inter-connected recreation areas both for recreational uses and wildlife habitat protection.

UNINCORPORATED AREAS (OUTSIDE PLANNED COMMUNITIES)

Local Parks (e.g. Mini-Parks, Neighborhood Parks, Community Parks and Large Urban Parks)

Based on the service area and cost of service (acquisition, development and maintenance), it is recommended that the County generally not be involved in the development or maintenance of this type of park. The acquisition of specific local sites in these categories may be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Alternatively, they may be provided through and maintained by private developments.

Regional Parks

The regional park will be the cornerstone of the park system in Ada County. In addition to upgrading Barber Park, it is recommended that additional regional parks be equally dispersed and developed throughout the county. A list of the regional parks and their recommendations are discussed below.

Existing Sites:

- **Barber Park** – Implement master plan.
- **Eagle Island State Park** – Partner with City of Eagle and Idaho State Park to develop this site into a regional park.

Proposed Sites:

- **Swan Falls** – Acquire/develop new regional park in the Swan Falls area. Explore partnership opportunities with Idaho Power to develop a facility in this area.
- **Rocky Canyon (East)** - Acquire/develop new regional park in the Rocky Canyon area (east).
- **Rocky Canyon (West)** - Acquire/develop new regional park in the Rocky Canyon area (west).
- **Hubbard Reservoir** – Develop new regional park on County owned/leased land. Explore options for acquiring/preserving additional land in this area.
- **Celebration Park** - Explore partnership opportunities with Canyon County.

Special Use Areas/Facilities

Special use areas/facilities can be either urban or non-urban in nature and may consist of a couple of acres to several hundred acres in size, depending on their use. Some types of recreation areas, by their nature are more conducive to non-urban types of environments. Traditionally, counties have gravitated toward providing facilities that are non-urban and have left the urban types of facilities to local jurisdictions.

In Ada County, the county provides both urban (e.g. sports field complexes) and non-urban (e.g. fairground/campgrounds) facilities. However, all of these facilities have been provided through leases and/or partnerships with local or private agencies. It is recommended that the County continue this approach to providing additional special use facilities by developing partnership and cooperative arrangements with other agencies. A list of the special use areas and their recommendations are discussed below.

Existing Sites:

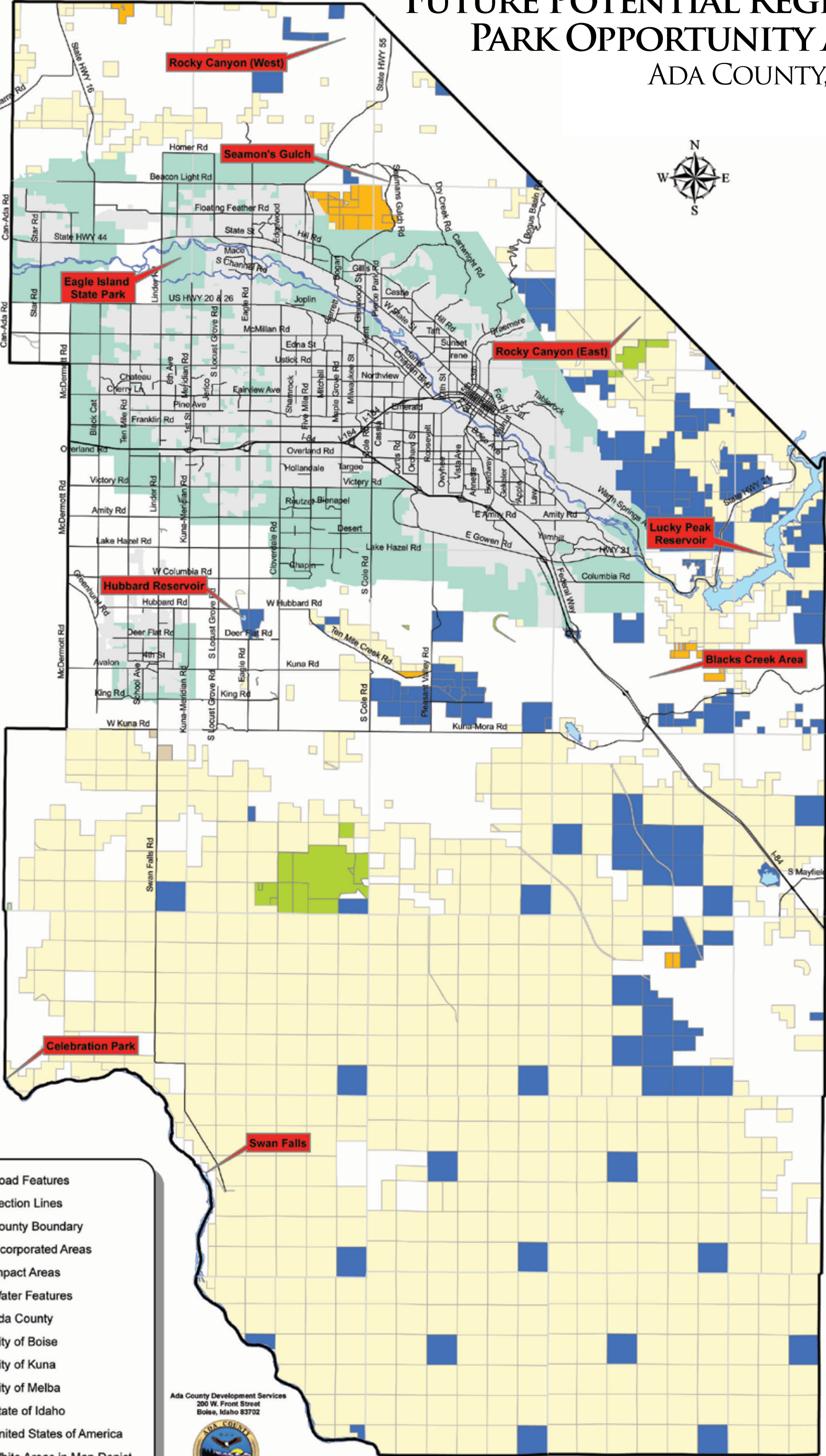
- **Lady Bird Park** – No Action (Managed by Expo ID)
- **Simplot Sports Complex** – No Action (Leased to City Boise)
- **Ada Eagle Sport Complex** – No Action (Leased to City of Eagle)
- **Les Bois Racing Park** – No Action (Leased from Fair)
- **Boise Hawks Stadium** – No Action (Leased from Fair)
- **RV Park and Campground** – Work with City of Garden City to develop long-term Master Plan (Leased from Fair)

Proposed Sites:

- **Black's Creek** - Acquire/develop new special use area in the Black's Creek area for the development of a shooting facility or possibly other specialized (compatible) recreation uses. Explore partnership opportunities with local, state and federal agencies to develop this facility.
- **Reynolds Creek** - Acquire/develop new special use area in the Reynolds Creek area for an OHV area. Explore partnership opportunities with state and federal agencies to develop this facility.
- **Lucky Peak Reservoir** - Acquire/develop new special use area for the development of marina and campground. Explore partnership opportunities with state and federal agencies to develop this facility.
- **Miscellaneous Areas & Waterways** - Acquire additional acreage to meet future population needs and ensure geographical accessibility to all residents:

FIGURE 6.1


FUTURE POTENTIAL REGIONAL PARK OPPORTUNITY AREAS ADA COUNTY, IDAHO



- Road Features
- Section Lines
- County Boundary
- Incorporated Areas
- Impact Areas
- Water Features
- Ada County
- City of Boise
- City of Kuna
- City of Melba
- State of Idaho
- United States of America
- White Areas in Map Depict Private Ownership Parcels

0 1.25 2.5 5 Miles

Ada County Development Services
200 W. Front Street
Boise, Idaho 83702



www.adaweb.net

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Linear Parks (Trail Corridors and Connections)

Linear parks are areas that following elongated corridors and generally contain trails that may be located in the vicinity of river and stream corridors, or along other linear features such as roads, railroad grades, utility corridors and irrigation canals (subject to successful negotiations with willing landowners). These may be paved or unpaved and connect existing trails, public lands and existing communities.

Two major river corridors run through Ada County (Boise and the Snake Rivers corridors). While some portions of these corridors have already been protected (separately and in partnership with local, state and federal agencies), others portions remained threatened by development and incompatible land use. It is recommended the County in partnership with other jurisdictions; acquire additional riverfront property for the purpose of expanding the existing network of trails.

Future trail routes will be aligned to minimize impacts to wildlife habitat, may cross roads using existing or new underpasses or overpasses, and may have limitations on types of uses to help protect wildlife. Trails may also be aligned in the vicinity of historic trail corridors where feasible and will be designed and developed to provide an overall mix of non-motorized recreational opportunities to accommodate a variety of user groups and individuals with different levels of ability. A list of the linear parks and their recommendations are discussed below.

Existing:

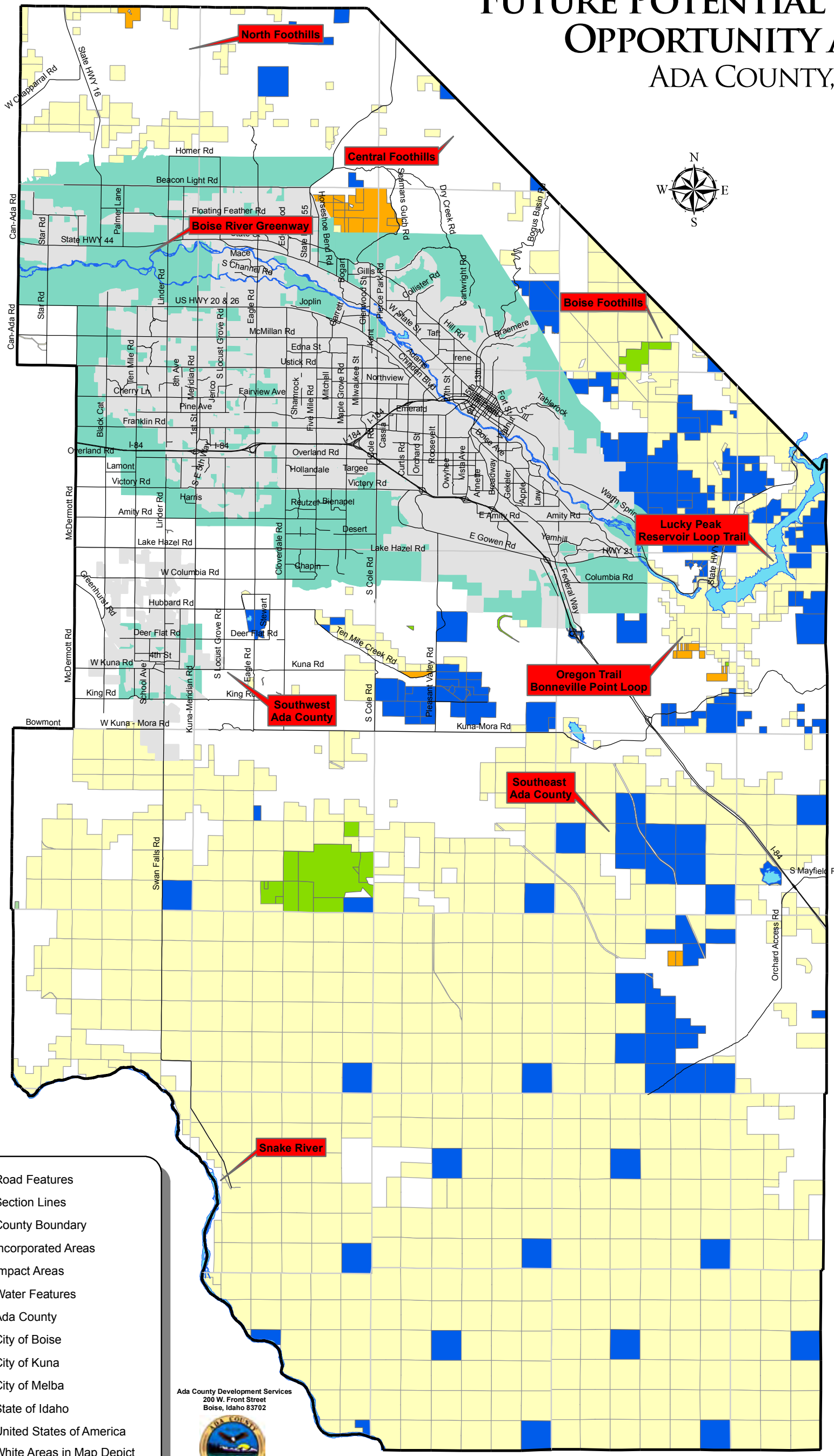
- **Boise River Greenway** – Partner with local cities (e.g. Boise, Eagle, Garden City and Star) and State of Idaho Parks and Recreation to complete the Boise Greenway and Trail system (see Figure 6-3).
- **Boise and North Foothills Areas** – Implement Ridge to Rivers Trails Plan. Partner with City of Boise, City of Eagle, BLM, Department of Fish and Game and private property owners to expand the Foothills Trails system.

Proposed:

- **Snake River** - Partner with Idaho Power, Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, Canyon Country, Owyhee County and private property owners to develop a Greenway and Trail System along the Snake River.
- **Luck Peak Reservoir** – Partner with federal agencies to develop a trail system along the perimeter of the reservoir.
- **Southwestern Ada County** – Partner with City of Kuna, BLM and private property owners to develop a trails system in this area.
- **Southeastern Ada County** – Partner with BLM and State of Idaho to develop a trails system in this area.
- **Central Foothills** – Partner with City of Boise, City of Eagle, BLM, State of Idaho and private property owners to develop a trail system in this area.
- **Oregon Trail/Bonneville Point Loop** - Partner with City of Boise, BLM and private property owners to expand the Oregon Trail.
- **Other Stream and Canalways**

FIGURE 6.2

FUTURE POTENTIAL TRAIL OPPORTUNITY AREAS ADA COUNTY, IDAHO



- Road Features
- Section Lines
- County Boundary
- Incorporated Areas
- Impact Areas
- Water Features
- Ada County
- City of Boise
- City of Kuna
- City of Melba
- State of Idaho
- United States of America
- White Areas in Map Depict Private Ownership Parcels

0 1.25 2.5 5 Miles

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Boise, Idaho 83702

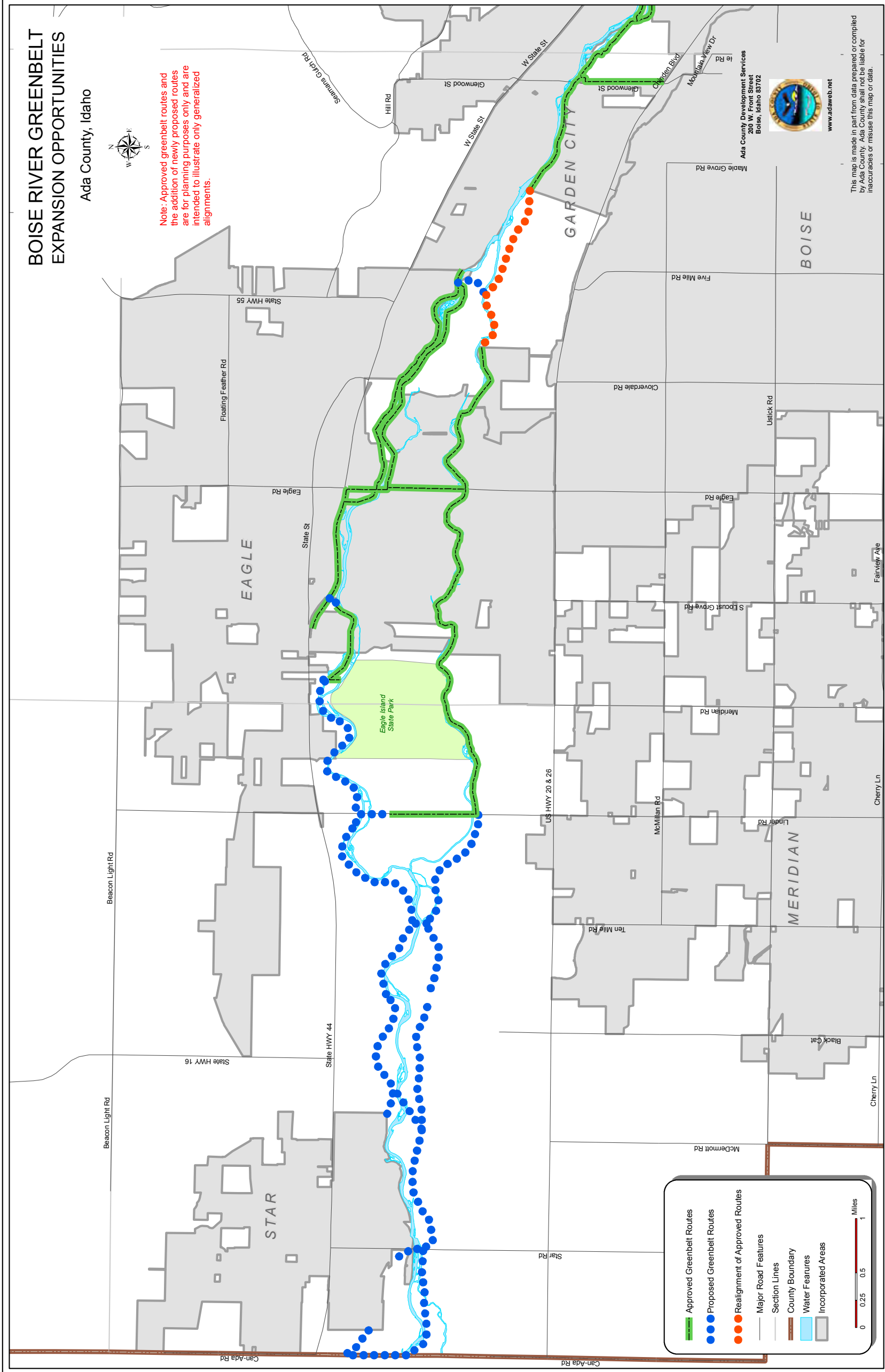


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FIGURE 6.3

BOISE RIVER GREENBELT EXPANSION OPPORTUNITIES ADA COUNTY, IDAHO



Open Space/Greenways

Natural open space areas have been identified as areas that possess important natural resources, such as significant wildlife habitat, large ecosystems, rare plant species, or other resource values. These lands may allow for passive outdoor recreational activities such as hiking, mountain biking, wildlife viewing, horseback riding, etc., when appropriate and when located to minimize impacts to important resource values. Within these important resource areas lie important water resources for wildlife habitat and diverse passive outdoor recreational opportunities.

It is recommended that County in cooperation with local, state and federal agencies as well as private land trusts preserve additional open space land throughout the County. A list of the special use areas and their recommendations are discussed below.

Existing:

- **Central and North Foothills** – Partner with local cities (e.g. Boise and Eagle), State and Federal agencies in addition to the local Land Trusts to secure additional open space areas

Proposed:

- **Foothills** - Partner with BLM, USFS and Idaho State Lands to secure lands adjacent to public land to provide additional buffers, protect riparian areas, preserve ridgelines, conserve geographic or historical sites.
- **Sensitive Areas** – Partner with federal, state and local jurisdictions to protect wetlands, steep hillsides, areas with threatened or endangered species.

PLANNED COMMUNITIES

The following table summarizes recommended standards for developed park and recreation facilities in Planned Communities. This recommendation is consistent with County staff’s recommendation of an overall standard of 10 acres per 1,000 people. In order to maintain the greatest amount of flexibility among different planned communities, a range within each subcategory is proposed to reflect unique conditions and needs of residents.

Park Area	Planned Communities - Suggested Allocation
Mini Parks	0.25 – 0.75 Acres per 1,000
Neighborhood Parks	1.0 – 3.0 Acres per 1,000 Population
Community Parks	1.0 – 3.0 Acres per 1,000 Population
Large Urban Parks	1.0 – 3.0 Acres per 1,000 Population
Linear Parks	0.0 – 1.0 Acres per 1,000
Special Use Areas/Facilities	1.0 – 3.0 Acres per 1,000 Population
TOTAL	10 Acres Per 1,000 population

Open spaces standards for Planned Communities are summarized in the following table.

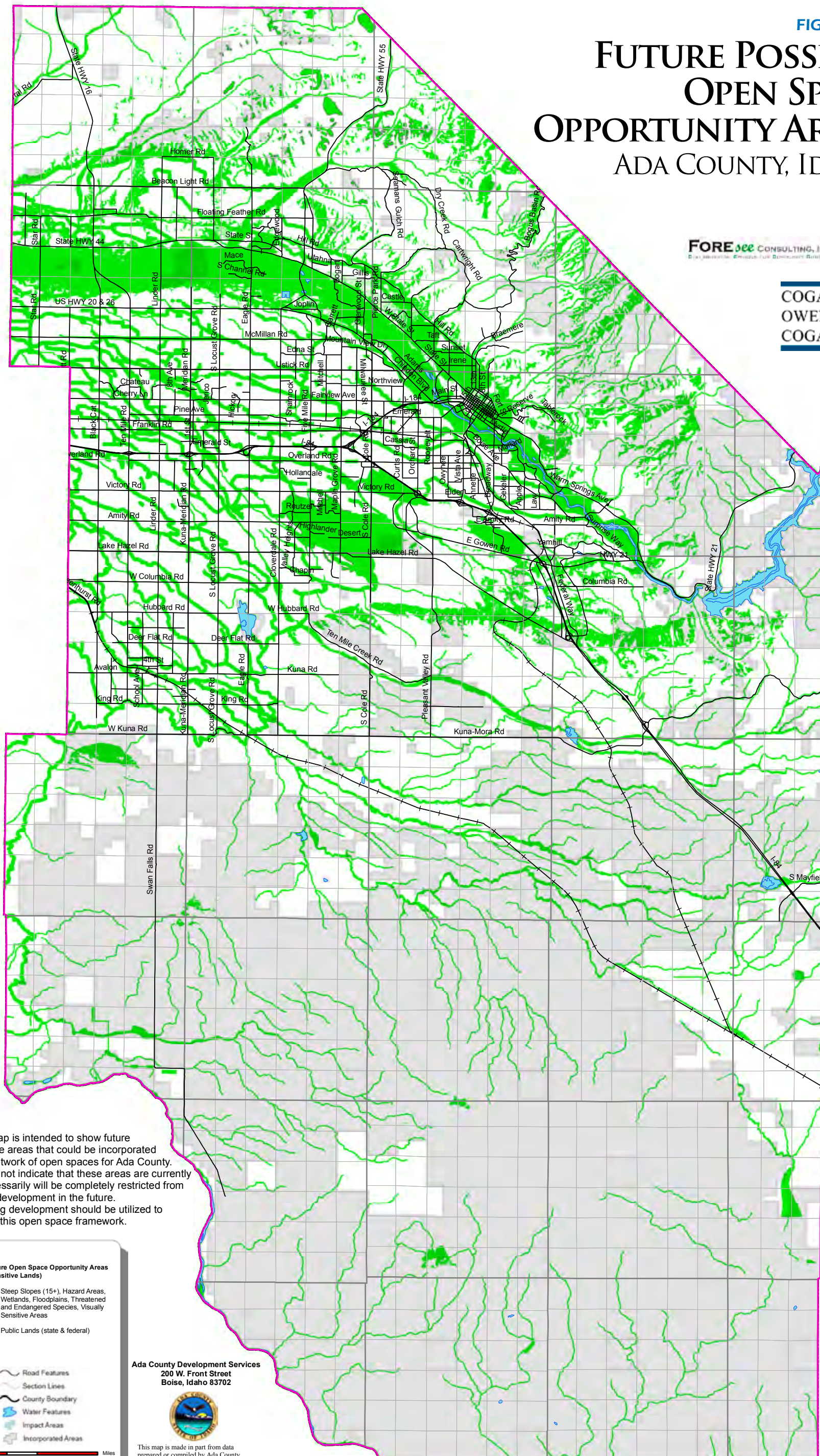
Types of Residential Community	<u>Recommended Minimum Total Natural Open Space</u> ⁽¹⁾	<u>Minimum Required Developed Open Space</u>
Conservation/Preservation	30% of gross acreage	10 acres per 1,000 population
Foothill/Hillside	30% of gross acreage	10 acres per 1,000 population
Wetland/Floodplain	25% of gross acreage	10 acres per 1,000 population
Golf/Resort	15% of gross acreage	10 acres per 1,000 population
Flatland	10% of gross acreage	10 acres per 1,000 population
Mixed Use Village	5% of gross acreage	10 acres per 1,000 population
Office/Industrial/Major Retail	0% of gross acreage	10% of gross acreage

FIGURE 6.4

FUTURE POSSIBLE OPEN SPACE OPPORTUNITY AREAS ADA COUNTY, IDAHO

FORESEE CONSULTING, INC.
Environmental Planning and Assessment Services

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OWENS
COGAN



This map is intended to show future possible areas that could be incorporated in a network of open spaces for Ada County. It does not indicate that these areas are currently or necessarily will be completely restricted from future development in the future. Ongoing development should be utilized to realize this open space framework.

Future Open Space Opportunity Areas (Sensitive Lands)

- █ Steep Slopes (15+), Hazard Areas, Wetlands, Floodplains, Threatened and Endangered Species, Visually Sensitive Areas
- Public Lands (state & federal)

— Road Features
— Section Lines
— County Boundary
— Water Features
— Impact Areas
— Incorporated Areas

0 1 2 4 Miles

Ada County Development Services
200 W. Front Street
Boise, Idaho 83702



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6.3 RECREATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Listed below are some potential programs/services that could be offered or expanded.

Outdoor Recreation

- *Boating programs*
- *Hiking programs*
- *Wilderness Training*

Environmental Education

- *Interpretive programs*
- *Conservation programs*

Special Events

- *Holiday events*
- *“River” events*

Instructional Classes

- *Boater Education*
- *Firearm Education*
- *First Aid Education*

6.4 OPERATION/MANAGEMENT

Below are the recommendations for operation and management.

- **Agency Coordination:** *Provide coordination with other agencies regarding park and open space issues.*
 - *Coordinate with Idaho Power on recreation uses as part of relicensing of Swan Falls Hydroelectric Project. Explore partnership opportunities with Idaho Power to provide additional waterfront access points/day use areas.*
 - *Coordinate with County Transportation Division regarding on-street bike lanes. Incorporate bikeway and/or multi-use paths in to future road widening and development projects. Explore partnership opportunities with ACHD to provide additional linkages along roadways to connect with the Western Heritage Historic Byway and complete segments of the “loop” system and connections.*

- Coordinate with BLM, USFS and Idaho Department of Fish and Wildlife regarding preservation efforts in the Foothills and the implementation of a regional trails system.
 - Coordinate with irrigation districts and property owners to create trails along irrigation and drainage canals.
 - Coordinate with local jurisdictions regarding the acquisition/development of future regional park, special use facilities, linear parks and open space opportunities.
- **Development Review:** Review of land development proposals submitted to the Planning Department to ensure that the goals of the Parks and Open Space Master Plan are adhered to. Each development proposal should be reviewed to determine if it will impact important resources identified. Examples of coordination with development proposals to achieve the goals outlined in the Parks and Open Space Master Plan include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Review development proposals that are adjacent to existing open space areas to ensure compatibility and consistency with access. This is particularly important with the Foothills, along the Boise River Greenway and with Subareas.
 - Review development proposals for opportunities to create or connect trail segment to larger regional trail systems through easements or other methods.
 - Assuming the County implements park impact fees ordinance, each development should be reviewed to requests for parkland dedications.
- **Master Planning;** Prepare master plan and detailed subareas studies for a comprehensive trail system. Coordinate with other agencies to incorporate the Rails to Trails and Ridge to Rivers Trial program into a County wide comprehensive trails program. Explore the need for, develop and coordinate, if warranted, a plan similar to the Ridge to Rivers Plan for the areas of Eagle, Star, Kuna and unincorporated areas of the County.
- **Staffing:** Identify and achieve the level of staffing necessary to implement the goals and policies of this Plan and of the County's Parks and Open Space Plan.
- **Technical Assistance:** Provide technical assistance to smaller communities (e.g. acquisition, development, operations, etc.)
- **Cost Reporting System:** The County should develop a cost reporting system that accurately reflects the costs of all park and recreation related services. At the very least, costs should be broken out by:
 - Administration
 - Planning
 - Park maintenance
 - Open Space maintenance
 - Pathway/trail maintenance
 - Waterways
 - Recreation programs
- **Maintenance Management System:** To assist in this budgeting process and to help assure that adequate maintenance is performed, maintenance standards should be developed that describe the task, its frequency, and quality of attention.
- **Level of Service Standards:** Periodically, evaluate and update the current park level of service standards, as necessary, to reflect community needs and available resources.
- **Park Impact Fees:** Examine the feasibility of establishing an impact fee program.
- **Capital Improvement Plan:** Develop a Capital Improvement Plan that delineates funding needed to develop future facilities and the schedule for doing so based on projected need and demand.

- **Marketing Plan:** *In an effort to encourage and facilitate the concept of partnerships, volunteerism and donations, it is recommended that the County hire a part time coordinator to promote seek potential partners (corporations, non-profit agencies and individuals). This person could identify opportunities to use County recreational facilities to host special events, promote environmental education and achieve other goals of this Plan and the County's Parks and Open Space Plan.*
- **Public Input:** *Use statistically valid surveys and/or other means to identify where people recreate and to establish and refine priorities for future county park and recreation planning.*

CHAPTER 7

IMPLEMENTATION

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter identifies potential funding sources, a list of implementation projects and project priorities. It should be noted that some of these funding sources are new to the County, whereas others have been utilized in the past.

7.2 FUNDING OPTIONS

In order to obtain the level of service identified in Chapter 5, a variety of funding mechanisms will need to be employed. Below is a partial list of funding sources that could be used to assist in meeting this goal.

Federal:

- **Recreation Trail Program:** *The federal recreational trails program of 1998 establishes a program for allocating funds to the States for recreational trails and trail-related projects. Funds can be used for environmental and safety programs, maintenance and restoration; development and rehabilitation of trailhead facilities and trail linkages; purchase and lease of trail construction; and construction of new recreational trails. At least 30 percent of the funds received each year must be allocated to non-motorized projects. Another 30 percent of the funding is allocated to motorized projects. The remaining 40 percent of the funding is allocated to projects that serve diverse trail use types either motorized, non-motorized, or a combination of both motorized and non-motorized trail uses.*
- **Land and Water Conservation Fund:** *This is a federal grant program for the acquisition and development of parks and open space. L&WCF is funded primarily from a portion of the receipts from Outer Continental Shelf oil leases. It requires a 50% local match. The Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation administers this program.*
- **HUD Grants:** *Grants from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development can be used to fund a wide variety of projects. Most are distributed in the lower-income areas of the community. Grants can cover up to 100% of a project's cost.*
- **Boating Safety Account:** *The federal Boat Safety Account is the primary funding source for Idaho's Boating Safety Program. This federal program was established by Congress in 1972 and is administered nationally by the U.S. Coast Guard. These grant funds are generated from a portion of the federal motorboat fuel tax and can only be used for boating safety purposes. The Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation administers the Boat Safety Grant and the Boating Safety Program for the State.*

State Programs:

- **Waterways Improvement Fund (WIF):** *The waterways improvement fund was created by the Idaho Legislature in 1963. The program receives 0.84 percent of Idaho's state gas tax revenues. This returns funds to boaters who use Idaho's waterways while pursuing their gasoline-powered recreation. The current grant funding level for the program is about \$1.3 to \$1.4 million annually.*
- **Off-Highway Vehicle Programs:** *This program was created to provide facilities, trail improvements, and law enforcement for off-highway vehicle users. Since these vehicles (snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles, and off-highway motorcycles) use gasoline but do not use highways, one percent of the state gasoline tax goes into this fund. The money goes back to snowmobilers, off-highway motorcycle riders, and ATV riders in the form of grants to government agencies and private organizations who meet strict criteria for maintenance and operation of facilities.*
- **Urban and Community Forest Grants (UCF):** *The Idaho Urban and Community Forestry Grant is a 100% grant program aimed assisting local agencies in developing or improving a sustainable community forestry program. A total of \$30,000 is available for this grant program.*
- **Community Transportation Enhancement (CTE):** *Between \$100,000 and \$162,000 will be available for tree purchase and planting projects along major transportation corridors in Idaho communities. The maximum grant request is \$15,000. A minimum 10% cash match of the total grant funds received must be contributed by the applicant.*

County Programs:

- **Fee Simple Purchase:** *The County would acquire all of the owner's property and rights from an outright purchase by the County.*
- **Land Dedication:** *Generally a provision as part of the local development code. Lands are dedicated to local agency through the development review process.*
- **Living Trust:** *An owner wills land to the public agency yet retains ownership and control of the land until the landowner's death.*
- **Land Donation:** *A landowner who wants to preserve all or a portion of a significant open space area can arrange to transfer a property to a public agency for protection and preservation.*
- **Agreements and Leases** - *The public agency would acquire the right to use the property for certain purposes, for a specific length of time.*
- **Easements:**
 - **Conservation Easements** - *Conservation easements also known as, purchase of development rights, are a preservation alternative in which a landowner would convey a conservation easement to a qualified recipient, such as County agency. Conservation easement purchases are less costly than fee-title purchases because the land remains in private ownership (Ada County would assume no management responsibility) and the landowner continues to pay property tax. The disposition of development rights is permanent and remains with the title for all subsequent landowners. An easement is a legal agreement where a landowner relinquishes certain property rights for specific purposes. These easements should be long-term to prevent land speculators from benefiting from reduced taxes.*
 - **Trail Easements** - *An easement in a strip of property obtained for trail purposes, linear parks or wildlife habitat protection.*

- **Impact Fees:** Park impact fees provide money for the acquisition and development of park sites needed to maintain County park standards, given a certain level of population growth. Park impact fees cannot be used for maintenance or recreation programs. They are paid by the homeowner/builder at the time of building permits and cannot be held longer than eight years.

This may not be a viable tool for the County if the County establishes a higher standard than the current level of service. Basing the fees on a higher standard will obligate the County to pay for the higher level of service, compared to existing levels of service. Note: The City of Boise has been assessing park impact fees since 1994.

- **Park Capital Facilities Fund** — Funds allocated by the County to budget for major capital expenditures.
- **Annual Operating Budget**—Minor amounts of money for special studies or small improvement projects are funded through the Department's annual budget.
- **Special Assessments:**
 - **General Obligation Bonds:** These are voter-approved bonds with the assessment placed on real property. Passage requires a two-thirds majority approval by the voters.
 - **Serial Levy:** This is a local option property tax increase that must be approved by a simple majority of voters (50% + 1) and can be authorized for up to two consecutive years. Idaho Code limits this funding mechanism to a 1% increase over the jurisdiction's established levy rate. Note: The City of Boise used this mechanism to preserve open space in Foothills.
 - **Local Improvement Districts:** Local improvement districts (LIDs) may be formed for the purpose of constructing and funding public improvements in specific areas. Special assessments to those properties benefiting from the improvements are implemented through the formation of an LID.

- **Utility Franchise Fee**—This is a tax on electric, water, natural gas, solid waste, and cable TV service bills.

The City of Boise currently assesses a 1% local franchise fee on city residents' electricity, water, natural gas, solid waste, and cable TV bills.

- **User Fees:** User fees may be assessed for a variety of publicly provided facilities and services. Most often, user fees are assessed specifically to offset operating and capital costs. Note: The County currently charges a user fee at Barber Park.

Non Profits:

- **Land Preservation Organizations** - The public agency enters into an agreement with various private land preservation organizations, such as the Idaho Foundation for Parks and Lands and Land Trust of Treasure Valley, to protect large or unique land areas.
- **Private Grants, Donations, and Foundations:** Private grants and foundations provide money for a wide range of projects.

Other :

- **Joint Public–Private Partnerships:** A public agency enters into a working agreement with a private entity to help fund, build, and/or operate a public facility. The three primary incentives that a public agency can offer are free land on which to place a facility, certain tax advantages, and operational support for the facility.
- **Land Trades:** A public or private agency can exchange property.

7.3 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Below is a list of project identified in the Parks Master Plan.

Table 7.1
Project Implementation
 Ada County Park and Recreation Master Plan

	Time Frame		Action				
	Short Term *Within 6 Years)	Long Term (6 years or Longer)	Planning & Acquisition	Design & Development	Major Upgrade	Minor Improvement	Other
Mini Parks							
<i>None Identified – Located in Planned Communities Only</i>							X
Neighborhood Parks							
<i>None Identified – Located in Planned Communities Only</i>							X
Community Parks							
<i>None Identified – Located in Planned Communities Only</i>							X
Large Urban Parks							
<i>None Identified – Located in Planned Communities Only</i>							X

	Time Frame	
	Short Term *Within 6 Years)	Long Term (6 years or Longer)
Regional Parks		
Barber Park	X	
Swan Fall Park (P)		X
Rocky Canyon Park East (P)		X
Rocky Canyon Park West (P)		X
Hubbard Reservoir (P)	X	
Celebration Park		X
Eagle Island State Park	X	X
Special Use Areas		
Lady Bird Park		
Simplot Sports Complex		
Eagle Road Sport Complex		
Les Bois Racing Park		
Boise Hawks Stadium		
RV Park and Campground		
Luck Peak Park		X
Black's Creek Park (P)	X	
Reynolds Creek (P)		X
Sports Complex Sites (P)		X
Boise River Access Points (P)		X
Snake River Access Points (P)		X
Shooting Area (P)		X
OHV Area (P)		X
Campgrounds (P)		X
Extreme Sports Area (P)		X
Linear Parks		
Boise River Greenbelt	X	
Snake River Greenbelt (P)		X
Boise Foothills	X	X
North Foothills (P)		X
Lucky Peak (P)	X	

Action				
Planning & Acquisition	Design & Development	Major Upgrade	Minor Improvement	Other
		X		
X	X			
X	X			
X	X			
	X			
				X
				X
				(1) X
				(1) X
				(1) X
				(1) X
				(1) X
X	X			
X	X			
X	X			
X				X
X	X			
X	X			
X	X			
X	X			
X	X		X	
X	X			
X	X			

	Time Frame	
	Short Term *Within 6 Years)	Long Term (6 years or Longer)
Open Space Areas		
Barber Pools		
5 Mile Wetlands		
Hidden Hollow Landfill		
Vets Cemetery		
Seaman's Gulch		
Central Foothills (P)		
North Foothills (P)		
Federal and State Land Buffer Areas (P)		
Environmentally and Historic Areas (P)		

Action				
Planning & Acquisition	Design & Development	Major Upgrade	Minor Improvement	Other
				(1) X
				(1) X
				(1) X
				(1) X
				(1) X
X				
X				
X				
X				

(P) Indicates Proposed Facility

(1) Current Lease with City or Private Agency

7.4 PROJECT PRIORITIES

Participants at the two community meetings were presented with a list of potential opportunity sites or areas for possible future regional parks, trails and open space conservation. They were asked to identify the relative priority of each (low, medium or high).

Listed below are the results of the priority rankings for each major category.

REGIONAL PARKS & SPECIAL USE AREAS:

<i>Potential Regional Parks & Special Use Areas</i>	<i>Rank</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Black's Creek Area	1	H
Eagle Island State Park (through partnership with Idaho State Parks)	2	H
Hubbard Reservoir	3	H
Swan Falls (through partnership with Idaho Power)	4	H
Lucky Peak Reservoir (marina and RV camping facility)	5	H
Celebration Park (through partnership with Canyon Co.)	6	M
Seaman's Gulch	7	M
Rocky Canyon (west)	8	M
Rocky Canyon (east)	9	L

LINEAR PARKS/TRAIL CORRIDORS:

<i>Potential Linear Parks/Trail Corridors</i>	<i>Rank</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Boise River Greenway (areas outside incorporated cities)	1	H
Lucky Peak Reservoir Loop Trail	2	H
Boise Foothills	3	H
North Foothills	4	M
Oregon Trail/Bonneville Point Loop	4	M
Southwestern Ada County	5	M
Central Foothills	6	L
Snake River	7	L
Southeastern Ada County	8	L

OPEN SPACE AREAS:

<i>Potential Open Space Areas</i>	<i>Rank</i>	<i>Priority</i>
In wildlife habitat areas	1	H
Around Planned Communities	2	H
North Foothills	3	H
Adjacent to riparian areas and drainages	4	H
Along ridgelines	5	M
Near unique geological or historical sites	6	M
Central Foothills	7	M
Areas adjacent to federal land to provide buffers or transitional areas near development	8	M
Within Planned Communities	9	L
Around existing recreational areas	10	L

7.5 IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

A variety of actions have been identified to achieve the goals and policies of this plan as part of this process and the County’s 2006-2007 Comprehensive Plan Update process. They include the following actions, organized by Goal.

Overall Actions

Implementation Action: Develop a future facility plan map delineating facilities to be developed and where they will be located in order to limit jurisdictional conflicts, minimize duplication of services within other existing cities service boundaries, and help ensure that the county is not in conflict with existing cities proposed goals and objectives.

Implementation Action: Develop a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) that delineates funding needed to develop future facilities and the schedule for doing so based on projected need and demand.

Implementation Action: Develop and use a County park level of service standard based on future population projections per acre of parkland needed.

Implementation Action: Use statistically valid surveys and/or other means to identify where people recreate and to establish and refine priorities for future county park and recreation planning.

Implementation Action: Refine and implement a master plan for Barber Park.

Implementation Action: Work with the City of Garden City to develop and adopt plans and/or policies for the future use of the County Fairgrounds property that are consistent with County and local community objectives.

Facilities and Land Acquisition

Implementation Action: Conduct a regional, County-wide process to determine long-range priorities and opportunities for open space acquisition, including identification of a stable, long-term, publicly supported funding approach.

Pathways and Trails

Implementation Action: Refine estimates of how much open space is needed to accommodate future population growth according to standards adopted by the County.

Implementation Action: Coordinate with all local and state governments, recreation user groups and non-governmental organization to develop a County-wide open space plan.

Implementation Action: Explore the need for, develop and coordinate, if warranted, a plan similar to the Ridge to Rivers Plan for the areas of Eagle, Star, Kuna and unincorporated areas of the County.

Parks and Open Space

Implementation Action: Examine the feasibility of establishing an impact fee program.

Implementation Action: Identify opportunities to use County recreational facilities to host special events, promote environmental education and achieve other goals of this Plan and the County's Parks and Open Space Plan.

Implementation Action: Identify and achieve the level of staffing necessary to implement the goals and policies of this Plan and of the County's Parks and Open Space Plan.

Waterways

Implementation Action: Work with other agencies to develop and implement strategies to preserve the Boise River and river corridor, such as; required setbacks, mandatory easements for pathways and river access, and educational signage.

Implementation Action: Develop strategies to disperse boaters to the make boaters aware of opportunities on the Snake River and Swan Falls areas and to reduce overcrowding on Boise River/Lucky Peak.

Implementation Action: Support Idaho Parks and Recreation and the state Legislature to create mandatory “Boater Education” requirements for young operators.

Implementation Action: Support a feasibility study to determine the need, cost and possible location of a new four-season, deep-water marina on Lucky Peak.

Implementation Action: Continue boater education efforts and outreach to recreational boaters, including non-motorized paddle sport boaters.

Implementation Action: Support Idaho Parks and Recreation and the Legislature in updating boat registration fee schedules to reflect actual inflationary pressures.

Implementation Action: Work with other recreation providers and groups to support and implement improved and expanded recreational facilities at Eagle Island State Park.

7.6 FINANANCING STRATEGY AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Preparing a financing strategy and capital improvement plan were beyond the scope of this initial Parks, Trails and Open Space planning effort. As one of the first steps in implementing this plan, the County should work toward completion of these items, using the information in this chapter related to available funding sources and project priorities as a starting point.