



# Comprehensive Plan Audit

City Council Draft: 11.6.23

## Background

The City's current Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2014. When drafting the plan began in 2011, Ketchum was experiencing the impacts of the Great Recession locally with a decrease in employment, construction activity, property values, and City revenue. While the overarching vision established by the Plan still reflects the prevailing sentiment of the community, Ketchum has undergone significant change over the past decade marked by a substantial increase in its population and new development. These trends have escalated issues identified in the 2014 Comprehensive Plan and the ongoing workforce housing crisis, concerns about long-term downtown vibrancy, and worries surrounding the City's vitality and viability have spurred community discussions about growth and the future vision of Ketchum. In August 2023, the City initiated an update of the Comprehensive Plan and a rewrite of the City's land use regulations. This process includes three phases of work that are anticipated to take approximately two and a half years to complete.

The Comprehensive Plan update will be targeted in scope and not a "start-from-scratch" effort. This Comprehensive Plan Audit is intended to help define the scope of the update and establish clear expectations about the extent to which current sections in the Plan are likely to change (or not) as part of the update. While the entire Comprehensive Plan will be reviewed and updated to some extent to reflect current conditions, improve usability, and address gaps, this update will focus specifically on challenges and opportunities related to land use, housing, multimodal transportation, historic preservation, sustainability, and community character.

This Plan Audit was developed by Clarion Associates in collaboration with City of Ketchum Planning and Building Department staff and Economic and Planning Systems. Recommendations have been informed by an in-depth review of plan policies and implementation progress; an initial round of meetings with City departments, boards and commissions, regional partners, and other stakeholders with a direct or indirect role in helping to implement the 2014 Comprehensive Plan; and the experience of the consultant team with similar projects in Idaho and across the country.

The document is organized into three parts:

1. **Overarching Themes.** Includes a summary of six overarching themes that will guide the Comprehensive Plan update process and help shape the updated plan and the land use regulations that emerge from it.

2. **Recommended Updates.** Includes a section-by-section overview of recommended updates for each section of the Plan; supporting data, analysis, and plans that will help inform those updates; and other opportunities to help improve the clarity and user-friendliness of the plan.
3. **Implementation Progress.** Includes a summary of progress made by the City and its partners on plan implementation since 2014. Planning and Building Department staff have also prepared a detailed tracking sheet to help inform the Comprehensive Plan update.

## Overarching Themes

The following themes will guide the Comprehensive Plan update process and help shape the updated plan and the land use regulations that emerge from it.

### **ALIGN THE UPDATED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN WITH RECENT PLANS AND STUDIES**

Numerous plans and studies have been completed since 2014—or are currently underway—to support the implementation of Ketchum’s Core Community Values. These include the Housing Action Plan (established in 2022 and being updated annually), 2020 Transportation Master Plan, 2021 Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan, 5B Can (Blaine County’s Sustainability & Climate Program), 2023 Warm Springs Preserve Master Plan, Downtown Parking Study, Main Street Mobility Improvements, and Blaine County Community Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (update in progress), among others. These plans generally provide more detailed policy guidance than the Comprehensive Plan. As a result, the Policy Framework in the Comprehensive Plan will need to be recalibrated to “pull back” on the current level of detail and defer detailed recommendations to functional plans.

### **CLARIFY FUTURE LAND USE PLAN (MAP AND LAND USE CATEGORIES) AND ALIGN WITH LAND USE REGULATIONS**

The 2014 Comprehensive Plan was developed during a period of slow growth and economic uncertainty in Ketchum. In recent years, development has increased substantially, amplifying concerns about housing affordability, community character, historic preservation, mobility, and the loss of retail and industrial land. While the Future Land Use Plan emphasizes the importance of infill and redevelopment as a core component of the City’s growth strategy, it does not convey the degree to which this strategy will impact different areas of the community, and how those changes relate to neighborhood and community design priorities.

A key focus of the Comprehensive Plan update will be to facilitate a broader community conversation about the Future Land Use Plan, its role in shaping the ultimate buildout of Ketchum, and its relationship to other community priorities. This conversation will include the identification of areas with the potential to support future growth and the exploration of growth parameters for different locations (e.g., density, mix of uses, housing types, and site planning/design characteristics). Input will be incorporated as part of the updated Comprehensive Plan and implemented as part of the Land Use Regulations update to provide greater clarity and predictability regarding future growth in different areas of the community.

### **CLARIFY SUSTAINABILITY AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE PRIORITIES**

The 2014 Comprehensive Plan is grounded in the three pillars of sustainability—environmental, economic, and social—and one of the Core Community Values is ‘A “Greener” Community.’ Over the past decade, the City has taken steps to advance its sustainability goals, adopting Green Building Standards in 2015 and a Sustainability Action Plan in 2020. However, this progress was eroded by the recent passage of House Bill 287, which stripped the City’s ability to enforce the Green Building Standards. At the same time, wildfires, flooding, avalanches, extreme drought, and other effects of climate change have become increasingly common and impactful, and the 2021 Blaine County All-Hazard Mitigation Plan confirms Ketchum’s vulnerability. The Comprehensive Plan update process provides an opportunity to clarify the City’s sustainability and community resilience priorities and take steps to mitigate risk. Updates to the Comprehensive Plan will build from the City’s ongoing involvement as part of the Blaine County Regional Sustainability and Climate Program (5B Can) with an emphasis on strategies that Ketchum has the ability to advance through its land use regulations and day-to-day operations.

### **EXPAND FOCUS ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

Several of the Core Community Values articulated by 2014 Comprehensive Plan emphasize the importance of protecting Ketchum’s history and culture. Yet, as the community continues to grow and evolve, many of the City’s historic resources are being lost. A historic inventory conducted in 2020 found that over the prior decade, 20 percent of the City’s historic buildings were demolished. In response to this trend, the City re-established the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) in 2021 and the HPC adopted a new Historic Preservation Handbook and Guidelines on September 6, 2023. An updated resource survey is also planned and expected to be completed in early 2024. These tools will help guide the HPC in their review of proposed alterations and demolitions of designated historic buildings and landmarks.

The Comprehensive Plan update provides an opportunity to establish a stronger understanding of how history shapes the character of Ketchum and what historic resources within the City are important to save (and why), as well as to establish stronger policy guidance and priorities for historic preservation. These objectives can be accomplished by establishing a dedicated chapter for historic preservation in the updated Comprehensive Plan—essentially a “plan within the plan.” This approach can help the City meet eligibility requirements for grant funding without having to develop a standalone historic preservation plan. Expanded historic preservation content in the updated Comprehensive Plan will draw from ongoing efforts led by the HPC, as well as from existing background information within the 2014 Comprehensive Plan.

### **STRENGTHEN REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS**

Local governments, non-profits, and public agencies in the Wood River Valley have a long history of collaborating on regional initiatives, and one of the ten Core Community Values identified in 2014 was ‘Working as a Region.’ While the Policy Framework includes some goals and policies that support this value and the City is leading or participating in conversations on a number of regional initiatives (e.g., the Housing Action Plan), numerous participants expressed concern that over the past decade the region has lost its focus in this area. The Comprehensive Plan update process provides an opportunity to convene regional partners, identify opportunities to collaborate on issues of strategic

importance, and establish achievable actions to focus the City's efforts over the next three to five years.

### **CLARIFY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The 2014 Comprehensive Plan addresses a wide range of topics—ranging from land use, to housing, to mobility, to health and wellness. The City of Ketchum, or individual departments within the City, have the ability to lead implementation efforts in some areas, while they play a supporting or partner role in other areas. In some instances, the roles of the City, individual departments, nonprofit organizations, and partner agencies have also shifted over the past decade. Participants expressed the need to more clearly articulate roles and responsibilities in the updated plan, both within the Policy Framework and in the implementation chapter.

## Recommended Updates

This section provides an overview of recommended updates for each section of the plan; identifies the supporting data, analysis, and plans that will help inform those updates; and highlights other opportunities to help improve the clarity and user-friendliness of the plan. At minimum, each chapter will require a general refresh to ensure the introductory narrative and challenges discussion reflects current conditions and community priorities. The most substantial changes are recommended for the housing, community design and neighborhoods, mobility, economy, and land use chapters.

### SECTION-BY-SECTION RECOMMENDATIONS

Plan Section/Recommendations	Supporting Plans, Data, and Analysis
<b>PREAMBLE/INTRODUCTION</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replace to reflect where Ketchum is today/where you're headed (opportunity for data-based storytelling)</li> <li>• Update to reflect current process</li> <li>• Emphasize role of Comprehensive Plan as umbrella plan (higher level; supported by functional and area-specific plans; informs the City's strategic plan/CIP and annual department work plans)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draws from updates to Community Profile and supplemental analysis regarding buildout, residential and non-residential needs, and areas of transition</li> <li>• This information will be developed early in the process to help frame community conversations</li> </ul>
<b>CHAPTER 1: COMMUNITY VISION AND CORE VALUES</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vet/refine existing language based on results of community survey and community/stakeholder engagement</li> <li>• Consider updates to chapter structure to directly align with Core Community Values; <i>OR</i></li> <li>• Consider shifting chapter titles and organization to be more topic-focused to make the distinction between the values and chapter titles clearer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statistically valid community survey with custom questions</li> </ul>
<b>CHAPTER 2: ECONOMY</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update goals and policies to reflect housing challenges, displacement of local businesses caused by redevelopment, potential changes to light industrial district, and Mountain Rides' role in ground service connections</li> <li>• Potential need for new goals/policies to reflect the results of the land demand vs. supply analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Task 1.1.E: Land Demand vs. Supply Analysis (Residential and Non-Residential)</li> <li>• Sun Valley Economic Development Economic Profiles</li> <li>• Regional economic development initiatives</li> <li>• Crosswalk with 5B Can Regional Sustainability</li> </ul>
<b>CHAPTER 3: HOUSING</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update goals and policies to focus language on increasing supply of "community housing," with an emphasis on affordability for a variety of incomes (including workforce, permanent supportive housing,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Action Plan and input received as part of associated public engagement efforts</li> </ul>

Plan Section/Recommendations	Supporting Plans, Data, and Analysis
<p>above-median income, and those who want to retire in place)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate Housing Action Plan Year 2 Performance Measures include: at least 60% of housing stock is long-term occupied and 40% of Ketchum’s workforce can live in Ketchum.</li> <li>• Address outdated language and definitions (e.g., characterization of density and remove policies promoting seasonal/part-time home ownership)</li> <li>• Acknowledge creation of the Housing Department and the City’s now active role in the housing landscape</li> <li>• Add sidebar explanations: 1) Role of the Housing Action Plan/ongoing monitoring; 2) Regional Housing Partners</li> <li>• Update Housing profile in Appendix A to focus on bigger picture housing characteristics and trends; refer readers to Housing Action Plan for more detailed data and information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate with Housing Department re: most recent data from monitoring</li> </ul>
<b>CHAPTER 4: COMMUNITY DESIGN AND NEIGHBORHOODS</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and update goals and policies in light of recent/ongoing efforts and check in on public sentiment as part of this process</li> <li>• Incorporate a brief explanation of each area’s key characteristics as a companion to the Neighborhoods and Districts map</li> <li>• Establish a goal and brief set of policies for each Neighborhood and District to help inform land use regulations (and/or incorporate site and building design principles as part of the land use categories in Chapter 12)</li> <li>• Strengthen linkages to Future Land Use chapter (or potentially consolidate the two)</li> <li>• Relocate historic preservation policy to new chapter and expand</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land Capacity/Areas of Transition Analysis</li> <li>• Community and Stakeholder Engagement (Round 2 – Key Policy Choices)</li> <li>• Crosswalk with 5B Can—Land Use and Mobility &amp; Green Building</li> </ul>
<b>CHAPTER 5: NATURAL RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and update goals and policies in light of recent/ongoing efforts, the impacts of House Bill 287, and check in on public sentiment as part of this process</li> <li>• Strengthen discussion of natural systems (carry forward relevant context from Environmental Resource and Hazards profile in Appendix A to support goals and policies)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing Blaine County Regional Sustainability &amp; Climate Program efforts (crosswalk with Solid Waste and Recycling &amp; Land and Water Conservation)</li> <li>• 2020 Big Wood River Atlas</li> </ul>

Plan Section/Recommendations	Supporting Plans, Data, and Analysis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build on regional sustainability data and efforts</li> <li>• Add policies to support Goals NR5 and NR2 (re: public lands, tourism, and local economy)</li> <li>• Strengthen policies aimed to mitigate impacts of development activity in sensitive environmental areas and protect/preserve hillsides and riparian zone.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blaine County 2018 Inventory of Community Greenhouse Gas Emissions</li> </ul>
<b>CHAPTER 6: PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update Parks, Open Space, and Trails profile in Appendix A to reflect current conditions</li> <li>• Minor refresh to existing goals and policies to reflect current City practices and partnerships</li> <li>• Consider defining and establishing a target level of service for different types of parks</li> <li>• Consider new policy to address evolving needs for larger, higher density development to inform code updates (e.g., common open space requirements)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crosswalk with 5B Can—Land and Water Conservation</li> <li>• Blaine County Recreation District (BCRD) Needs Assessment Survey</li> </ul>
<b>CHAPTER 7: MOBILITY</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove Mobility profile in Appendix A (replaced by more recent plans and studies)</li> <li>• Update goals and policies to reflect recent plans and studies; stronger focus on regional coordination and transit priorities</li> <li>• Pull back level of detail in policies re: specific improvements (defer list of priorities to implementation section or supporting plans where they can be referenced as part of CIP)</li> <li>• Add sidebar explanations: 1) 2020 Master Transportation Plan; 2) Blaine County Community Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan; 3) Downtown Parking Study</li> <li>• Add the City's priorities for the public right-of-way, including providing vehicular, bike, and pedestrian access; public parking; wintertime snow storage; conveyance of utilities; and street trees/streetscape beautification/tree canopy.</li> <li>• Emphasize goals related to improving the City's bike lane network, sidewalk improvements, intersection and pedestrian safety improvements, and bringing nonconforming on-street parking and sidewalks into compliance with ADA.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2020 Transportation Plan</li> <li>• Forthcoming Update to Blaine County Community Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan</li> <li>• Downtown Parking Study</li> <li>• 2018 Sun Valley Friedman Memorial Airport Master Plan</li> <li>• Crosswalk with 5B CAN—Land Use &amp; Mobility</li> </ul>

Plan Section/Recommendations	Supporting Plans, Data, and Analysis
<b>CHAPTER 8: ARTS AND CULTURE</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minor refresh to reflect current City practices and partnerships (city-led)</li> <li>• Consider consolidating with proposed Historic Preservation chapter (could be: History, Arts, and Culture)</li> </ul>	
<b>CHAPTER 9: PUBLIC SAFETY AND UTILITIES</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update goals and policies reflect to current City conditions and stronger focus on resilience</li> <li>• Add new goal related to multi-hazard mitigation and expand existing policies to support (e.g., WUI, floodplain, avalanche prone areas, seismic activity)</li> <li>• Add sidebar explanation(s) re: 1) Water System 2) Regional HMP and others for context</li> <li>• Carry forward and update relevant aspects of Environmental Resource and Hazards profile in Appendix A and relocate as sidebars to support policies in this chapter (same list as for policies)</li> <li>• Consider renaming to reflect expanded resilience focus of this chapter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2022 Blaine County Multi-Jurisdictional All-Hazard Mitigation Plan</li> <li>• Current Water System Modeling (underway- Public Works)</li> <li>• Crosswalk with 5B CAN—Clean Energy</li> </ul>
<b>CHAPTER 10: COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLNESS</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update goals and policies to reflect current City practices and partnerships</li> <li>• Add sidebar explanations: 1) Health and Human Services Partners 2) Regional Food Security partners</li> <li>• Consider relocating some of the existing content from the Community Health and Wellness profile in Appendix A to this chapter as context, either as sidebars or as part of the introductory narrative. To the extent feasible, replace Idaho statistics with regional statistics to make them more relatable (or remove altogether)</li> <li>• Strengthen policies to ensure that Ketchum has sufficient schools, early childhood education, and child care to support the community now and in the future.</li> </ul>	<p>Wood River Valley Early Learning Advisory Committee: Community Needs Assessment Report</p>
<b>CHAPTER 11: HIGH PERFORMING COMMUNITY</b>	
<p>Minor refresh to reflect current City practices and partnerships (city-led)</p>	
<b>CHAPTER 12: FUTURE LAND USE</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update and expand land use category descriptions to provide clearer direction regarding mix of uses, density, and site and building design principles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land Capacity/Areas of Transition Analysis</li> <li>• Land Demand vs. Supply Analysis</li> </ul>



Plan Section/Recommendations	Supporting Plans, Data, and Analysis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update goals and policies to reflect current community sentiment and inform the Land Use Regulations update</li> <li>• Clarify direction for Areas of City Impact</li> <li>• Strengthen linkages to Community Design and Neighborhoods chapter (or potentially consolidate the two)</li> <li>• Incorporate 'zoomed' in version of the Future Land Use Map for different sections of the community to improve legibility (and make available on ArcGIS)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community and Stakeholder Engagement (Round 2 - Key Policy Choices)</li> <li>• Crosswalk with 5B Can—Land Use and Mobility</li> </ul>
<b>NEW CHAPTER: HISTORIC PRESERVATION</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relocate current policy CD 1.2; establish new goal(s) and policies to address adaptive reuse, relocation of historic properties, education and outreach, prehistoric archaeological sites, economic benefits of historic preservation, and other community priorities.</li> <li>• Relocate and update/expand current explanation and map of historic properties from Community Profile in Appendix A.</li> <li>• Include areas with the potential to become historic districts on the map.</li> <li>• Add sidebar explanation(s) re: 1) Role of the HPC; 2) Periods of Significance</li> <li>• Consider consolidating with existing Arts and Culture Chapter (could be: History, Arts, and Culture)</li> <li>• Add policies and goals to address the relocation of historic buildings and documenting historic buildings prior to demolition for digital record.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forthcoming survey of historic assets</li> <li>• Historic Preservation Handbook</li> <li>• Community Library Regional History Museum Resources</li> </ul>
<b>CHAPTER 13: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New chapter with a new structure</li> <li>• Organize as 'strategic plan' for the city organization with a 3- to 5-year focus and all departments represented</li> <li>• Establish clear linkage to budgeting and CIP processes</li> </ul>	
<b>APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY PROFILE</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and update profiles as needed</li> <li>• Shift location of descriptive content to individual chapters (where referenced above) to provide context for goals and policies</li> <li>• Update inventory maps and consider making them available on ArcGIS online for legibility and ease of</li> </ul>	<p>See discussion relative to individual chapters/topics above</p>

Plan Section/Recommendations	Supporting Plans, Data, and Analysis
maintenance (recommend including maps in relevant chapters even if they are available online so that readers have a sense of what information is available)	
<b>APPENDIX B: COMPLIANCE WITH STATE OF IDAHO REQUIREMENTS</b>	
Review/refresh as needed to reflect any recent updates	Idaho Statutes
<b>APPENDIX C: GLOSSARY OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TERMS</b>	
Review and update as needed as part of draft plan	

**ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE CLARITY AND USABILITY**

As section-by-section recommendations are carried out, opportunities to improve the clarity and usability of the document should also be considered. These opportunities may include: editorial changes for consistency; minor structural adjustments to improve the alignment of key ideas within the plan; reframing the ‘vision’ and ‘challenges’ section at the beginning of chapters 2 through 11; and removing repetitive or regulatory language in the policies.

**Implementation Progress**

Planning and Building Department staff have assembled a detailed tracking sheet that documents the status of each of the recommendations in the Priority Implementation Plan established as part of the 2014 Comprehensive Plan. Recommendations are categorized as completed, in progress (more than halfway), in progress (halfway), in progress (not halfway), and not started. Some of the key areas of progress include:

- **Targeted code amendments.** These have included updates to light industrial use and development standards to promote clean industry and home-based businesses; the adoption of energy efficiency requirements (through HB 287 has removed authority); and stronger environmental regulations in certain areas (e.g., protection of night skies).
- **Expanded role for the City on housing initiatives.** This has included the creation of the Housing Department, adoption of the Housing Action Plan, and a strong leadership role for the City in implementing and monitoring progress on housing priorities.
- **Completion of numerous functional plans and studies.** These plans and studies are discussed in the Overarching Themes section of this document.

As the updated Comprehensive Plan takes shape, priority recommendations from 2014 will be revisited to determine whether they need to be carried forward in some form. Recommendations related to the Land Use Regulations will be reviewed and addressed as part of that update.