



**Ponderay 2050**

# City of Ponderay Comprehensive Plan [DRAFT]

Month, Day, 2025



# Project Information

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# Introduction & Background

**Make no little plans...** is a well-known quote among city planners and is attributed to Daniel Burnham, the famous architect who wrote one of the nation's first comprehensive plans for the City of Chicago. While the City of Ponderay does not desire to be, nor is it anticipated to become, a large city, Ponderay is making good on its promise of being *"the little city with the big future."*

This Comprehensive Planning effort commenced in January of 2024, just following the COVID-19 pandemic, which accelerated in-migration to the rural West, including to Bonner County, Idaho, and within the City of Ponderay. While the pace of post-pandemic migration has leveled off, growth is anticipated to continue. Located at the northwestern end of Lake Pend Oreille, Idaho's largest lake and for which the city is named, Ponderay is a gateway to world-class recreation, including Schweitzer Mountain Resort and three nearby mountain ranges. As a regional commercial hub, the city is home to large retailers and a variety of small businesses. Ponderay neighborhoods have emerged as attractive and more affordable alternatives for many households compared to neighboring Sandpoint, especially for young families that may find housing costs otherwise out of reach. The city has made substantial investments to improve the quality of life for residents through supporting grants and a previous local option 1% sales tax, including Phase 1 of the 50-acre Field of Dreams Recreation Complex to the north and designs for the Lakeshore Connection Project to the south.

While Ponderay is poised for growth in many ways, constraints exist for new development. Approximately 900 acres of undeveloped property surrounding the Field of Dreams lack basic infrastructure such as roadways, sewer service, and water pressure. Ponderay is also situated within the Clark Fork-Pend Oreille watershed, necessitating careful consideration in site planning for drainage patterns, stormwater treatment, and habitat preservation.

*This plan envisions a bold future for the city, but at an incremental pace, ensuring services and infrastructure are in place to support new development. It was shaped over a year and a half through various community engagement efforts, including surveys, feedback booths at popular community events, outreach to organizations and service districts, and public meetings held by the Planning Commission and City Council. Despite growth and change that may occur over the course of this plan's 25-year horizon, the values expressed by the community have been carried into its policies. Key themes include maintaining and enhancing Ponderay's small-town feel and identity, delivering more walking and biking possibilities, enhancing recreational amenities while preserving natural features, providing new educational facilities and opportunities for Ponderay's youth, ensuring a diverse mix of housing types, supporting business innovation and opportunity, and creating destination hubs for neighbors to gather.*

# Plan Purpose

City planning has multiple purposes, not the least of which is to ensure that the community has an active part in deciding how the city looks, functions, and meets the needs of its residents as the future brings change. This document is intended to help coordinate decision-making across a wide range of topics toward desired outcomes. Specifically, the purposes of this plan are to:

- ◆ **Provide Consistent Policy Direction**

All the plan's elements and policy directives, such as for transportation, land use, recreation, housing, and economic development, are intended to work cohesively and comprehensively.

- ◆ **Set the Stage for What Can Be Built and Where**

This plan serves as the legal basis for adopting zoning, subdivision, and other regulations and policies that shape a community over time. It ensures that development decisions are not “made on the fly” but done in the context of a broader community vision and provides a degree of predictability for property owners, businesses, and residents.

- ◆ **Guide Budgeting**

This plan ensures public investments will advance the community's overall vision for the future.

- ◆ **Support Grant Applications**

Whether from a private or public source, this document demonstrates how a grant application is supported by the community's long-range plan and community preferences.

- ◆ **Provide an Interagency Negotiation Tool**

As the official guidance document for the City of Ponderay, this plan will help in working with other agencies and jurisdictions to realize the community's vision.

- ◆ **Meet Statutory Requirements**

Idaho's Local Land Use Planning Act (§67-6508) requires that jurisdictions prepare a comprehensive plan which considers “...existing conditions, trends, compatibility of land uses, desirable goals and objectives, or desirable future situations...” for the community.

# A Brief History of Ponderay

The City of Ponderay is located along the edge of Idaho's largest and deepest lake in Idaho—Lake Pend Oreille. The city is in Bonner County, which contains four national protected areas: the Pacific Northwest Scenic Trail, Coeur d'Alene National Forest, Kaniksu National Forest, and Kootenai National Forest.



The city's name is an English phonetic spelling of the French words “pend oreille,” or “hanging ear.” Ponderay was incorporated as a village in 1947 and became the City of Ponderay on November 26, 1968. The town was originally built on the site of the Panhandle Smelting and Refining Company, which also created a hotel, office buildings, and residences for employees. In addition to the smelting and refining company, railroads and timber helped to establish the town, and the Ponderay Transportation Company delivered mail with two steam tugs to and from all the post offices on Lake Pend Oreille.

Today, Ponderay is a gateway town to Schweitzer Mountain Resort, is a regional retail center, and has established a business-friendly reputation to several small businesses. The city is also emerging as a popular alternative for many at various life stages looking for a place to call home.

# Idaho Planning Duties

67-6508. Planning duties. It shall be the duty of the planning or planning and zoning commission to conduct a comprehensive planning process designed to prepare, implement, and review and update a comprehensive plan, hereafter referred to as the plan. The plan shall include all land within the jurisdiction of the governing board. The plan shall consider previous and existing conditions, trends, compatibility of land uses, desirable goals and objectives, or desirable future situations for each planning component. The plan with maps, charts, and reports shall be based on the following components as they may apply to land use regulations and actions unless the plan specifies reasons why a particular component is unneeded.

## Property Rights

An analysis of provisions which may be necessary to ensure that land use policies, restrictions, conditions and fees do not violate private property rights, adversely impact property values or create unnecessary technical limitations on the use of property and analysis as prescribed under the declarations of purpose in chapter 80, title 67, Idaho Code.

## Population

A population analysis of past, present, and future trends in population including such characteristics as total population, age, sex, and income.

## School Facilities and Transportation

An analysis of public school capacity and transportation considerations associated with future development.

## Economic Development

An analysis of the economic base of the area including employment, industries, economies, jobs, and income levels.

## Land Use

An analysis of natural land types, existing land covers and uses, and the intrinsic suitability of lands for uses such as agriculture, forestry, mineral exploration and extraction, preservation, recreation, housing, commerce, industry, and public facilities. A map shall be prepared indicating suitable projected land uses for the jurisdiction.

## Natural Resources

An analysis of the uses of rivers and other waters, forests, range, soils, harbors, fisheries, wildlife, minerals, thermal waters, beaches, watersheds, and shorelines.

## Hazardous Areas

An analysis of known hazards as may result from susceptibility to surface ruptures from faulting, ground shaking, ground failure, landslides or mudslides; avalanche hazards resulting from development in the known or probable path of snowslides and avalanches, and floodplain hazards.



## Public Services, Facilities, and Utilities

An analysis showing general plans for sewage, drainage, power plant sites, utility transmission corridors, water supply, fire stations and firefighting equipment, health and welfare facilities, libraries, solid waste disposal sites, schools, public safety facilities and related services. The plan may also show locations of civic centers and public buildings.

## Transportation

An analysis, prepared in coordination with the local jurisdiction(s) having authority over the public highways and streets, showing the general locations and widths of a system of major traffic thoroughfares and other traffic ways, and of streets and the recommended treatment thereof. This component may also make recommendations on building line setbacks, control of access, street naming and numbering, and a proposed system of public or other transit lines and related facilities including rights-of-way, terminals, future corridors, viaducts and grade separations. The component may also include port, harbor and other related transportation facilities.

## Recreation

An analysis showing a system of recreation areas, including parks, parkways, railways, riverbank greenbelts, beaches, playgrounds, and other recreation areas and programs.

## Special Areas or Sites

An analysis of areas, sites, or structures of historical, archeological, architectural, ecological, wildlife, or scenic significance.

## Housing

An analysis of housing conditions and needs; plans for improvement of housing standards; and plans for the provision of safe, sanitary, and adequate housing, including the provision for low-cost conventional housing, the siting of manufactured housing and mobile homes in subdivisions and parks and on individual lots which are sufficient to maintain a competitive market for each of those housing types and to address the needs of the community.

## Community Design

An analysis of needs for governing landscaping, building design, tree planting, signs, and suggested patterns and standards for community design, development, and beautification.

## Agriculture

An analysis of the agricultural base of the area including agricultural lands, farming activities, farming-related businesses and the role of agriculture and agricultural uses in the community.

## Implementation

An analysis to determine actions, programs, budgets, ordinances, or other methods including scheduling of public expenditures to provide for the timely execution of the various components of the plan.

## National Interest Electric Transmission Corridors

After notification by the public utilities commission concerning the likelihood of a federally designated national interest electric transmission corridor, prepare an analysis showing the existing location and possible routing of high voltage transmission lines, including national interest electric transmission

corridors based upon the United States department of energy's most recent national electric transmission congestion study pursuant to sections 368 and 1221 of the energy policy act of 2005. "High-voltage transmission lines" means lines with a capacity of one hundred fifteen thousand (115,000) volts or more supported by structures of forty (40) feet or more in height.

***Because no national interest in electric transmission corridors or "high-voltage transmission lines" is within the jurisdiction of the City of Ponderay, this component is not included in the plan.***

### Public Airport Facilities

An analysis prepared with assistance from the Idaho transportation department division of aeronautics, if requested by the planning and zoning commission, and the manager or person in charge of the local public airport identifying, but not limited to, facility locations, the scope and type of airport operations, existing and future planned airport development and infrastructure needs, and the economic impact to the community.

# Planning for Health

The “Social Determinants of Health” refers to the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age<sup>1</sup>. While not a required comprehensive plan element in Idaho, this plan considers these determinants and recognizes that a plan’s elements, such as land use, transportation, housing, recreation, and economic development, directly influence long-term community health outcomes.

These five determinants are:

- ◆ **Social and Community Context**  
A community’s future competitiveness depends on its people’s relationship with each other and their community.
- ◆ **Economic Stability**  
A dynamic community economy provides a place for residents to earn good wages, remain employed, and meet basic needs.
- ◆ **Education**  
High-quality education from early childhood through postsecondary is essential to access jobs. Post secondary education, including universities, colleges, trade, and vocational schools are becoming increasingly important.
- ◆ **Neighborhood & Built Environment**  
Safe, obtainable housing for a variety of tenures and incomes, neighborhoods promoting physical activity, and access to daily needs can, over the long term, contribute to positive community health outcomes.
- ◆ **Community Health & Safety**  
Health and safety services, including emergency services, health care facilities, hazardous areas, and environmental characteristics have a direct impact on livability, quality of life, and community health.



*This plan recognizes that health outcomes for a community are interrelated and ultimately inseparable from how a community functions and adapts over time. Look for this call-out box to see how long-term community health may relate to topics addressed throughout this document.*

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<sup>1</sup> Building a Healthy Idaho: Improving the Conditions in Which Idahoans Are Born, Grow, Live, Work, & Age (2020).

# Property Rights

The City of Ponderay supports and respects private property rights. As such, the policies and actions identified by this plan must follow due process in the evaluation and adoption of any implementing regulations. Principally, implementing regulations must not create a “regulatory taking,” which is a regulatory or administrative action resulting in deprivation of private property that is the subject of such action, whether such deprivation is total or partial, permanent or temporary, in violation of the state or federal constitution (Idaho Code §67-8001). The Idaho attorney general has provided Idaho Regulatory Takings Act Guidelines<sup>2</sup> to facilitate understanding and provide guidelines to governmental entities to help evaluate the impact of proposed regulatory or administrative actions on private property owners. Appendix C of the Guidelines provides a checklist for evaluation and contains the following criteria:

- 1. Does the Regulation or Action Result in a Permanent or Temporary Physical Occupation of Private Property?**
- 2. Does the Regulation or Action Condition the Receipt of a Government Benefit on a Property Owner Dedicating a Portion of Property, Granting an Easement, or Expending Funds for Items Unrelated to the Impacts of the Proposed Action?**
- 3. Does the Regulation Deprive the Owner of All Economically Viable Uses of the Property?**
- 4. Does the Regulation Have a Significant Impact on the Landowner’s Economic Interest?**
- 5. Does the Regulation Deny a Fundamental Attribute of Ownership?**

The goals, policies, and proposed actions of this planning document have not been found to satisfy the criteria set by the Attorney General for a regulatory taking. Subsequent regulations to implement this plan, however, should be evaluated against the criteria above and in context of local, regional and national case law, as it may pertain to the adoption of new regulations.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://ag.idaho.gov/content/uploads/2018/04/RegulatoryTakings.pdf> (2023)



# Setting the Stage

This section provides an overview of existing baseline conditions for Ponderay at the time of this plan's adoption, which aided the community and decision makers in planning Ponderay's future throughout the process.

Ponderay has seen a recent surge in development, primarily multi-family residents, which has resulted in a significant population increase of residents living within the city center. Many who currently reside in Ponderay are over the age of 65, and approximately two thirds of housing units are occupied by renters—unique to many other cities in the area. As a commercial center for the region, nearly a quarter of workers who

live in the city are in the retail and trade industry. Accommodation and food service, manufacturing, as well as health care and social assistance also employ many city residents. However, a vast majority of workers in Ponderay commute from outside the city either by choice, lack of appropriate housing options, or by economic necessity. The city is served by Lake Pend Oreille School District (LPOSD) whose district offices reside in Ponderay, however, the district currently has no school within city limits

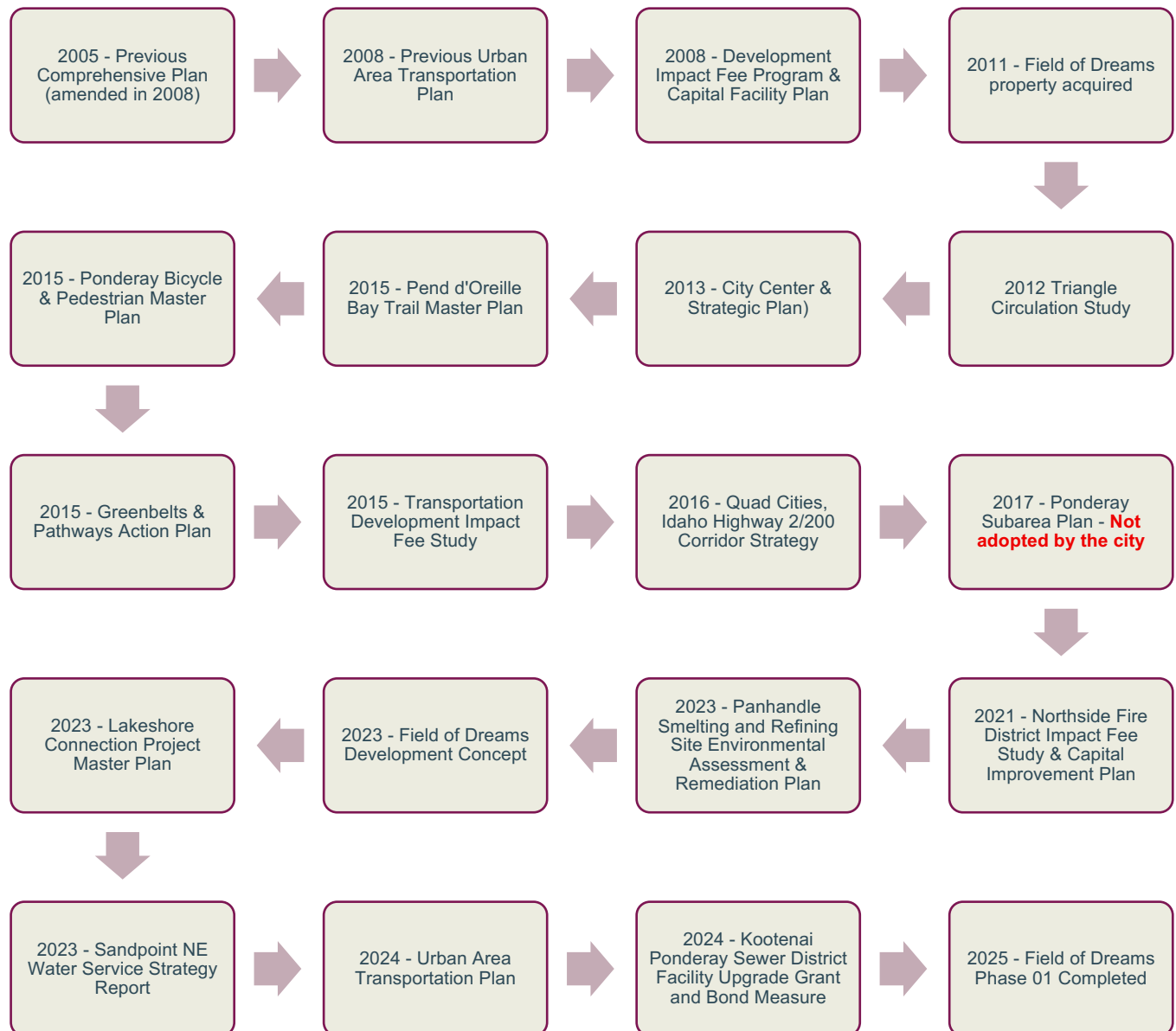
A variety of population projection scenarios have been created based on factors including historic recent growth rates in both the city and the county. The highest projection indicates that by year 2050, the city would have grown to just under 9,000 residents—nearly 5 times as large at time of this plan's adoption. Growth within Ponderay, however, is highly dependent on market forces and overcoming existing service constraints from water and sewer availability.



*Figure 1 - A recent multi-family development in the city center  
(photo: Aaron Qualls)*

# Past Planning Efforts

This plan updates the existing 2005 Comprehensive Plan, folding in elements of and references to planning efforts since 2005 and its latest amendment in 2008. Below is a timeline of major local and regional planning milestones applicable to the future of Ponderay.



# Households and Housing Stock

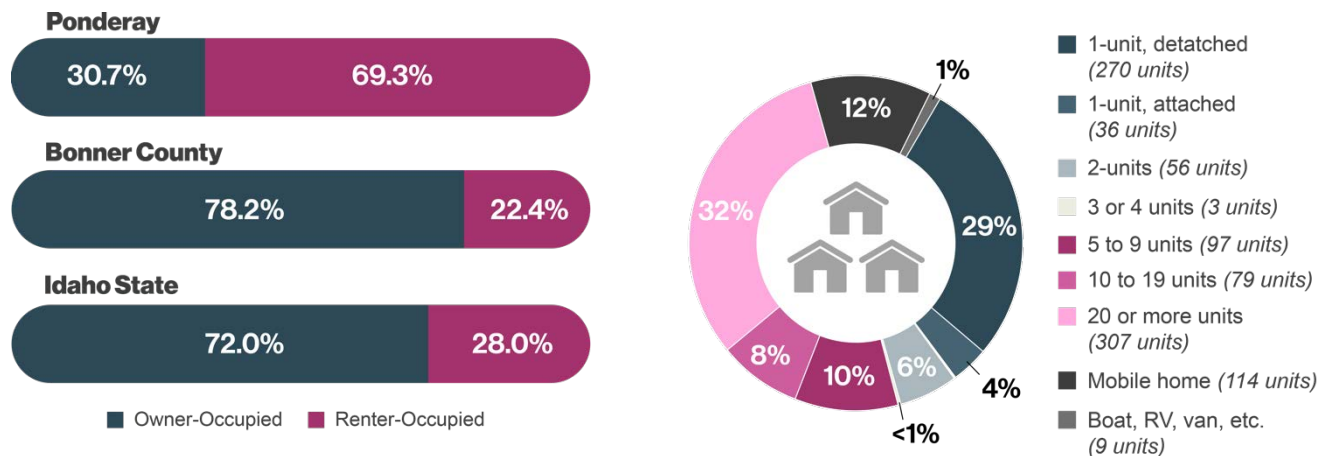
Nearly 85% of Ponderay's housing units are occupied within the city. Most are occupied by renters, with an average household size of 2.42 people, which is slightly less than the Bonner County average of 2.56 people per renter-occupied household and the Idaho average of 2.45. The average household size for owner-occupied units in Ponderay is 2.59 people, which is higher than the 2.48 average for Bonner County but lower than the 2.74 average for Idaho.

Based on census and local data, nearly two-thirds of the housing stock within Ponderay is comprised primarily of single-family detached units and the more recently developed larger (20 or more unit) multi-family developments. Mobile homes, duplexes and smaller multi-family development (from 5 units-19 units) make up the balance. There are very few triplexes, quadplexes or platted townhomes indicating a potential market for certain of "missing middle housing<sup>3</sup>" types.

Out of the over 600 housing units occupied, over two-thirds are rented, with the remaining units occupied by homeowners, making Ponderay unique compared to Bonner County and the state of Idaho with respect to housing tenure.



Figure 2 - Recently constructed small-lot housing near McNearney Park



<sup>3</sup> <https://missingmiddlehousing.com>

# Income and Affordability

Ponderay has a median income of \$50,119 per 2023 census data, which is lower than both Bonner County and the state of Idaho. Between 2010 and 2023, Ponderay's median income levels increased by 111%, while Idaho's median income levels increased by 60.8% during the same period.

The relatively low AMI of households within Ponderay is likely, to a degree, affected by a lower-than-average household size—indicative of a retirement community/single person households.

According to 2023 estimates, the median gross rent in Ponderay was \$988 per month, and \$1059 per month for Bonner County. However, per a recent comparative study provided to the City by Black Realty Management in October of 2023, average rent for a multi-family unit was found to be \$1,319.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines affordable housing as “housing on which the occupant is paying no more than 30 percent of their gross income for housing costs, including utilities.” As of 2022 census data, 50.4% of rental households in Ponderay spend more than 30% of their household income on rent. Approximately 19.4% of owner-occupied households with mortgages spend more than 30% of their household income on housing costs.

**In all, this means at least 38% of occupied housing units within Ponderay are not considered affordable by HUD standards.**



*High housing costs relative to wages earned can place limits on economic development efforts, may displace long-time residents, and force families to make financial choices that could threaten their stability and health. Those with chronic housing instability are more likely to suffer poor physical and mental health, putting additional strain on existing health care services.*

*"Housing And Health: An Overview of the Literature," Health Affairs Health Policy Brief (2018)*



# Economic Development

A dynamic economy is one in which a community can earn good wages, remain employed, and meet their basic needs year-round. This section contains basic economic information about supporting industries, and inflow and outflow of employees.

## Jobs and Industry

Based on the U.S. Census Bureau's tool, OnTheMap, Ponderay had approximately 2,228 total jobs (2022).

The largest industries in terms of the number of jobs held by workers in Ponderay businesses are:

- ◆ Retail Trade (35.0%)
- ◆ Accommodation and Food Service (13.0%)
- ◆ Manufacturing (11.2%)
- ◆ Health Care and Social Assistance (9.1%)
- ◆ Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (8.8%)

Ponderay residents work primarily in the following industries, which are both inside and outside of the city limits:

- ◆ Retail Trade (19.0%)
- ◆ Manufacturing (14.4%)
- ◆ Health Care and Social Assistance (12.7%)
- ◆ Construction (9.9%)
- ◆ Accommodation and Food Service (8.1%)

Figure 3 shows the distribution of jobs by industry for Ponderay workers who live outside the city, and for Ponderay residents who work inside and outside of the city.

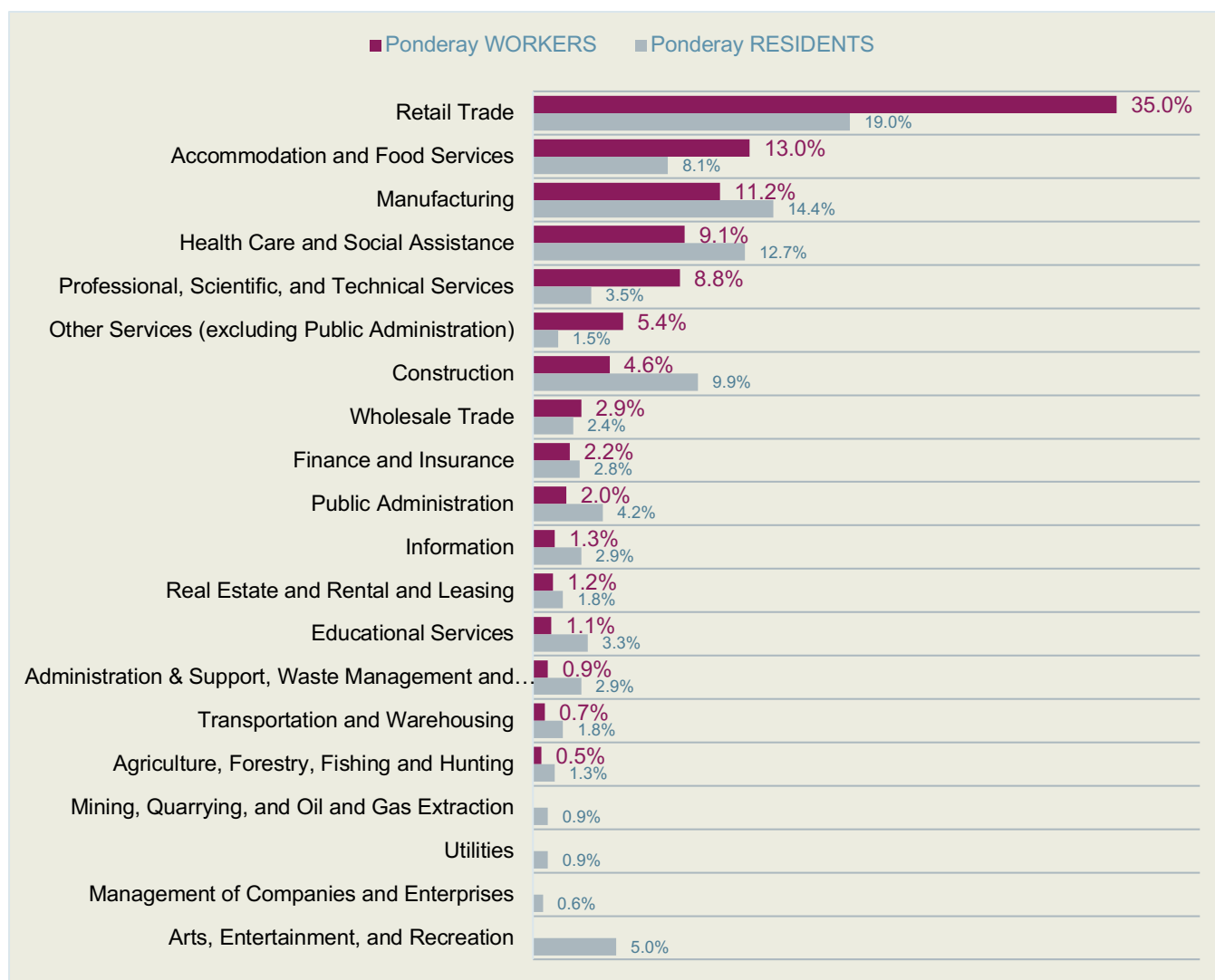


Figure 3 – Ponderay Employment by Industry, 2022 Census data

## Inflow/Outflow of Employees

The figure on this page shows the inflow and outflow of employees in Ponderay according to 2021 estimates. According to the data, Ponderay sees a net gain of about 1,498 people (1,968 in minus 470 out) commuting into the city for work. The available data also indicates that 83 workers in Ponderay also live in the city, meaning 82.4% of the jobs in the city are held by non-residents. The data also indicates how vital the city is to the economy of the surrounding region. It is important to note that this data can be somewhat skewed by larger employers with a corporate address outside of the area. The overall trend, however, may be indicative that most who work in the city do not reside within the city, either by choice or necessity.



Figure 4 - Commuting Patterns in Ponderay (U.S. Census, 2021)

# Education

High-quality education from early childhood through postsecondary is essential to access jobs. Broadly, post-secondary education, including universities and colleges, and trade and vocational schools, are becoming increasingly important.<sup>4</sup>

Based on the most recent American Community Survey data available, the educational attainment of Ponderay is similar to the county. About 43% of the city's residents have graduated high school and have not pursued further education. Approximately one quarter of Ponderay residents hold a higher degree, and another quarter have acquired some college education without obtaining a degree. Approximately 6% of the population has not graduated high school.<sup>5</sup>

The city has one private school, the Sandpoint Christian School, which is a faith-based learning space. The nearest college is in Sandpoint, the North Idaho College. The nearest four-year colleges are Gonzaga University, Whitworth College, and Eastern Washington University, which are all located in Washington state. The University of Idaho is the closest in-state four-year college, located 132 miles away in Moscow.



*A skilled workforce is critical for retaining and attracting businesses that may also lead to incomes where families are enabled to make healthier choices for their families, improve living conditions and afford health care.*

## Lake Pend Oreille School District (LPOSD)

Lake Pend Oreille School District (LPOSD) serves Ponderay, and has 13 school locations in the area, though none are within Ponderay city limits. The LPOSD is the largest district Bonner County, serving grades kindergarten through 12, and a total of 3,822 students (2024 enrollment). The four-year graduation rate for the Lake Pend Oreille School district in 2022 was 84.2%, up from 83.7% in 2021, but down from 88.7% in 2020. The district's per pupil expenditures in 2022 were \$11,833. This was higher than the statewide average of \$9,832.

**Engagement efforts yielded high interest in the siting of a future school facility within the city. Should the northern area of town around the Field of Dreams absorb future growth as predicted, a school facility in close, walkable distance to surrounding residential development would provide mutual benefits to the city, resident families, and the school district.**

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<sup>4</sup> Source: Building a Healthy Idaho: Improving the Conditions in Which Idahoans Are Born, Grow, Live, Work, & Age (2020).

<sup>5</sup> Source: ACS 2022 5-Year Estimates, S1501



# Transportation

Rails and roadways are highly influential in Ponderay, establishing patterns of travel to and through the area—bringing both opportunities and constraints. The city has approximately 5.2 miles of paved road and 1.4 miles of gravel road, which are divided into principal arterials, minor arterials, collectors, and local roads. Ponderay is lacking in pedestrian and bicycle facilities but has completed pathways on the north side of the Kootenai Cut-Off Road and along the east side of Hwy 95.



*Figure 5 - Ponderay youth learning rules of the road for bicycle safety during the City's annual Bike Rodeo at McNerney Park (Photo: Aaron Qualls)*

One primary constraint which the city has taken steps to remedy, is the lack of access to Lake Pend Oreille, an incredible resource forming the city's eastern edge but made largely inaccessible due to the presence of an active rail line. The Burlington Northern (BNSF) line runs along the shores of Lake Pend Oreille, currently separating the community from the water. The Lakeshore Connection Project, federally funded through a BUILD grant, has enabled the city to design for an underpass to create pedestrian access from the City-owned Harbison Field to the waterfront and Ponderay Bay Trail. Construction funds, however, have yet to be obtained.



Figure 6 - Concept Plan for the Lakeshore Connection Project



The regional commercial district along US 95, including Bonner Mall, is built just east of the highway within what is commonly referred to as the "Triangle." Commercial development along SH 200 is more modest; both smaller in scale and serving a more local customer base. A Union Pacific (UPRR) line and rail siding runs roughly parallel to Highway 200, immediately along that roadway's western edge until its intersection with Kootenai Cutoff Road. There are currently only two crossings of the UPRR line, one at Eastgate Drive connecting to Bonner Mall Way and the other at Kootenai Cutoff Road.

The Lakeshore Connection Project also includes improvement designs for Hwy 200—including a new pathway between the rail line and the Highway. The pathway was conceptualized by the Greenbelts and Pathways Plan and would link up with the Creekside Trail, providing a new bike and pedestrian connection to neighboring Sandpoint. Designs for Hwy 200 may also consider more convenient and safer crossing opportunities near Eastgate Drive to better connect the older neighborhoods south of Highway 200, and the waterfront access point envisioned.

Kootenai Cutoff Road in Ponderay runs east-west, linking Highway 95 and Highway 200 in a way that caps the "Y" formed by US 95 and SH 200, forming the third leg of the Triangle. From Kootenai Cutoff, McNearney Rd., designated as a major collector in Ponderay's most recent Transportation Capital Improvement Plan, is anticipated to see additional traffic as the Field of Dreams continues to attract users and as development occurs north of Kootenai Cutoff.

## Public Transit

The Selkirks-Pend Oreille Transit (SPOT) bus service operates through a joint powers agreement serving the cities of Dover, Sandpoint, Kootenai, Ponderay, and Bonners Ferry. SPOT represents the first public transit system to serve the City of Ponderay, providing access to healthcare services, shopping, recreation, and other basic needs. There are four charter buses/taxi services within the city, which provide transportation to and from the Spokane International Airport and the Spokane Amtrak passenger train.



*The built environment can profoundly affect travel mode choice or viability, which in turn can have long-term health impacts. Those who live in walkable communities where there are short distances and safe, comfortable routes to key destinations such as stores, parks, or trails tend to walk more. Walking regularly is well documented to reduce risks of obesity and improve mental health, both of which are identified as top health challenges in Bonner County.*

*(2022 Community Health Needs Assessment by Bonner General Health)*

# 2015 Transportation Capital Improvement Plan

Below are the projects identified by the city in 2015 with improvement cost estimates. These projects, along with their costs, form the basis for Ponderay's Impact Fees<sup>6</sup> on new development for transportation system infrastructure. Refinement to this plan, along with funding sources and associated impact fees, may warrant review following subsequent efforts, including the 2024 Urban Area Transportation Plan and the 2023 Lakeshore Connection Master Plan.

Anticipated Construction	Project	Estimated Project Cost
1 – 5 years	<b>Schweitzer Cutoff</b> (City Limits to US-95)	\$10,000 <sup>1</sup>
1 – 5 years	<b>SH-200 Intersection Improvements</b> (excluding Eastgate Drive improvements)	\$93,000
1 – 5 years	<b>Kootenai Cutoff Road Phase 1 Improvements:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Starr Road Roundabout</li> <li>Raised Medians (US 95 to Triangle Drive)</li> </ul>	\$956,000
1 – 5 years	<b>Bonner Mall Way at US-95</b> (New Road 1)	\$1,310,000
6 – 10 years	<b>Kootenai Cutoff Road Phase 2 Improvements:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NcNearney Road Roundabout</li> <li>Raised Medians (Triangle Drive to SH-200)</li> </ul>	\$940,000
11 – 20 years	<b>Kootenai Cutoff at SH-200 Intersection Improvements</b>	\$340,000
11 – 20 years	<b>Kootenai Cutoff Road Phase 3 Improvements:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Road 3</li> </ul>	\$2,346,000
	<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>\$5,995,000</b>

<sup>1</sup>Represents Ponderay's local match for this regionally funded STIP project.

Figure 7 - 2015 Transportation Capital Improvement Plan

<sup>6</sup> Impact fees are one-time fees developers pay to offset the cost of public infrastructure improvements to serve new development. See Idaho Code §67-8204.

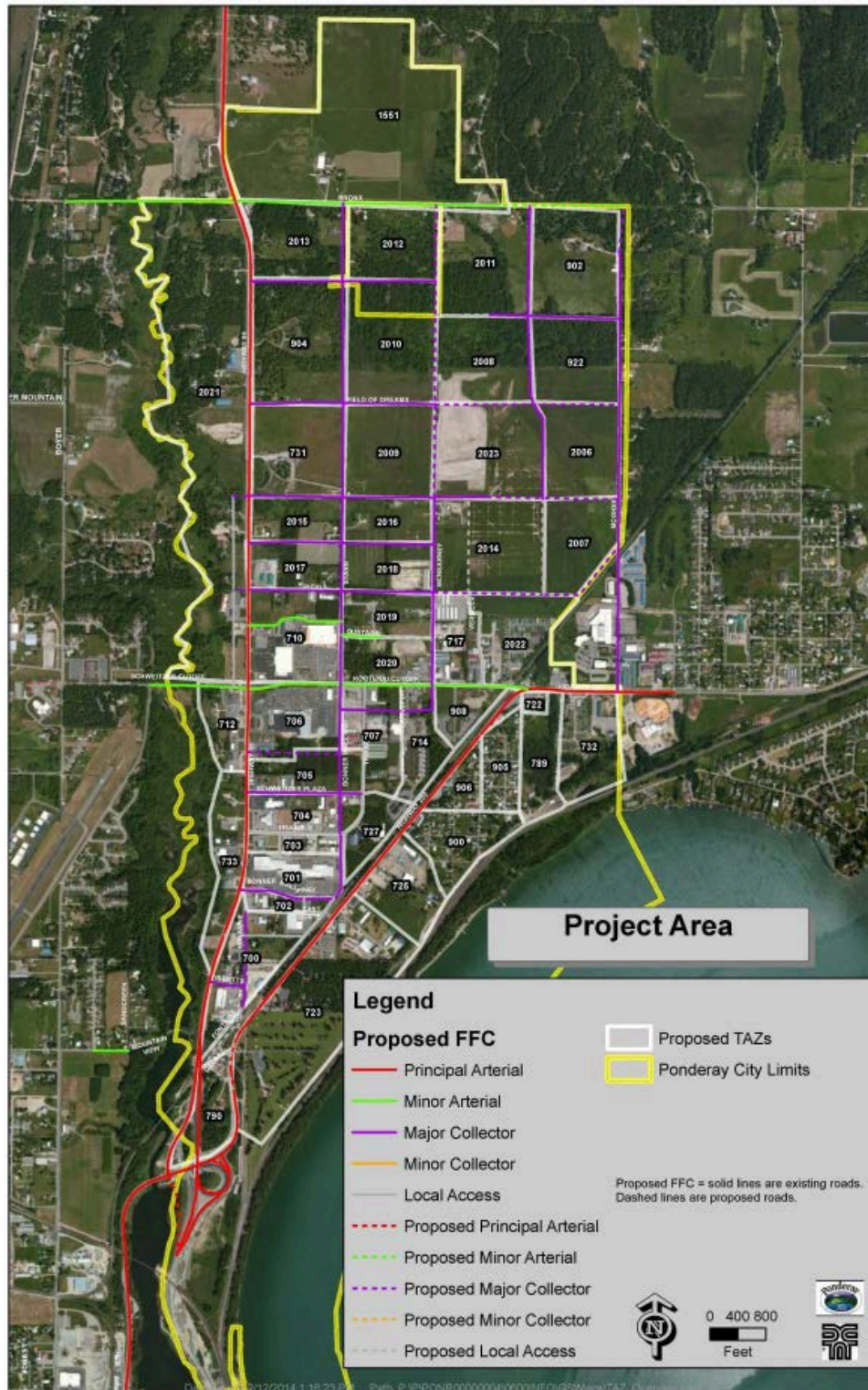


Figure 8 - Existing and Proposed Street Classifications for Major Routes (2015 Transportation Development Impact Fee Study)



# 2016 Greenbelts and Pathways Plan

Ponderay's Greenbelts and Pathways plan identifies 18 short-term and long-term projects to "...increase connectivity, protect rural lands and watersheds, and increase access to Ponderay's most prized but underutilized asset: Lake Pend d'Oreille."

Additional pathways and safer options for walking and biking were found to be widely supported by those who participated in the engagement activities as part of this planning effort. Greenbelts, and open, irrigatable spaces also support stormwater treatment needs and may support efforts to increase capacity for the Kootenai-Ponderay Sewer District.



# 2024 Urban Area Transportation Plan

Completed in 2024, the multi-jurisdictional Urban Area Transportation Plan (UATP) for Bonner County identifies the following projects within the city of Ponderay which are listed below. It should be noted that the adopted UATP provides no analysis or recommendations for Eastgate Drive, which is the central connection along Highway 200 to the city's commercial center, and which is bisected by Union Pacific Railroad property at Hwy 200. While UPRR has indicated possible closure of Eastgate Dr. in the past, this plan presumes this vital connection will remain and be improved to enhance safety and mobility.

<b>Lakeshore Underpass and Pend d'Oreille Bay Trail Extension</b>	The Lakeshore Underpass and Pend d'Oreille Bay Trail Extension Project proposes a two-lane road from SH-200 to the railroad, and multimodal improvements to the east of this. The underpass connection will be a multimodal path that does not need vehicle access, aside from emergency vehicle access.
<b>Kootenai Cutoff Railroad Crossing</b>	The Kootenai Cutoff Railroad Crossing Project proposes improvements to solve the traffic and capacity issues.
<b>McNearny Road</b>	The McNearny Road Project proposes road widening, updates to current design standards, and bike and pedestrian facilities. The first phase of the project would include the southern portion of the road to the Field of Dreams. The second phase of the project would include the rest of the roadway up to Bronx Road.
<b>Oneida Drive</b>	The Oneida Drive Project proposes paving the road, updating to road to current design standards, and adding facilities for bikes and pedestrians.
<b>Path Along Sandcreek</b>	The Path Along Sandcreek Project proposes a pedestrian path to connect to the trailhead.



Figure 9 - 2024 UATP Priority (orange) and Secondary (teal) Projects

# Public Services, Facilities, and Utilities

## Water

The City of Sandpoint provides Ponderay with water service. Sandpoint's system is supplied by the Little Sand Creek water treatment plant and the Lake Water Treatment Plant, which draws water from Lake Pend Oreille.

Significant water system investment will be needed to enable development in Ponderay's northern area surrounding the Field of Dreams. In 2023, a study by Keller Associates was conducted that evaluated service in the northeast portion of Sandpoint's water service area, which includes areas in the northern portion of Ponderay. The study confirmed pressure and flow deficiencies and provided three alternatives to create a new pressure zone to address system shortcomings. The costs associated with the recommendations range from approximately 9 million to 13 million. The study also recommended interim improvements, including a large-diameter transmission line. It was also predicted that additional water storage will be needed, such as an elevated or hillside tank.

## Sewer

The Kootenai-Ponderay Sewer District (KPSD) provides wastewater services and maintains 22 miles of sewer main lines, 14 lift stations, and 4 treatment lagoons. The district's wastewater treatment plant is located in the southeastern portion of the district near Boyer Slough. Treated effluent is disinfected with chlorine before being discharged to Boyer Slough or the district's land application site, which is located in the northeastern portion of the district.

KPSD is planning for significant plant upgrades through an approved bond initiative and awarded grant funding. The planned upgrades will expand capacity and provide wastewater treatment to enable irrigation, given the limitations on the district for disposing of treated wastewater into the lake. New development in currently unserved areas may therefore need to incorporate "purple pipe" infrastructure to provide conveyance of treated wastewater for irrigation or storage.

## Police

The Ponderay Police Department was founded in 1994 and has a total of seven sworn officers on staff, and one administrative assistant. There are four patrol vehicles, and the department is located in a refitted log home in the city's business district.

## Fire

The Northside Fire Department is one of the largest fire districts in Bonner County. It protects two major highways, three railways, and a portion of the TransCanada pipeline. The staff is made up of mostly volunteers who logged over 500 hours of training in 2023. The station is located at 437 Cedar Ave. in



Ponderay. The department responded to 479 fire calls and 387 emergency medical services calls in 2024<sup>7</sup>.

## Sandpoint Airport

The Sandpoint Airport is approximately two miles southwest of Ponderay's commercial center. A portion of the city falls within what is referred to by the Idaho Transportation Department Division of Aeronautics (ITD AD) Airport Land Use Guidelines as the "Inner Critical Zone" where certain restrictions or requirements are recommended to protect health and safety of both residents and of aviators.

## Broadband

Ponderay has many options for broadband connectivity (between 25-100 Mbps connection speeds) to provide video conferencing and video streaming.<sup>8</sup> Although very high speeds are not as available as in other areas of the state, remote work in the city has become viable, which will likely continue to draw residents who are able and willing to do so.

## Electric and Natural Gas

Electric and natural gas service is provided by Northern Lights and Avista Utilities.

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<sup>7</sup> Northside Fire District info retrieved from <https://www.northsidefire.org/>.

<sup>8</sup> Broadband Now (<https://broadbandnow.com/Idaho/Ponderay?zip=83852>)



# Natural Resources

## Clark Fork-Pend Oreille Watershed

The Clark Fork-Pend Oreille watershed is in western Montana, northern Idaho, and northeastern Washington. The Clark Fork River begins near Butte, Montana, and drains into the Columbia River. It is the source of water that enters and leaves Lake Pend Oreille, the largest and deepest natural lake in the state of Idaho.

Hydroelectric facilities regulate the inflow and outflow of water in the lake. The lake is the source of the Pend Oreille River in northeastern Washington, which drains into the Columbia River.

The Lake Pend Oreille Subbasin encompasses 70 square miles (44,740 acres) with the city of Ponderay near a low-point center indicating the need for careful attention to drainage patterns as new development occurs.

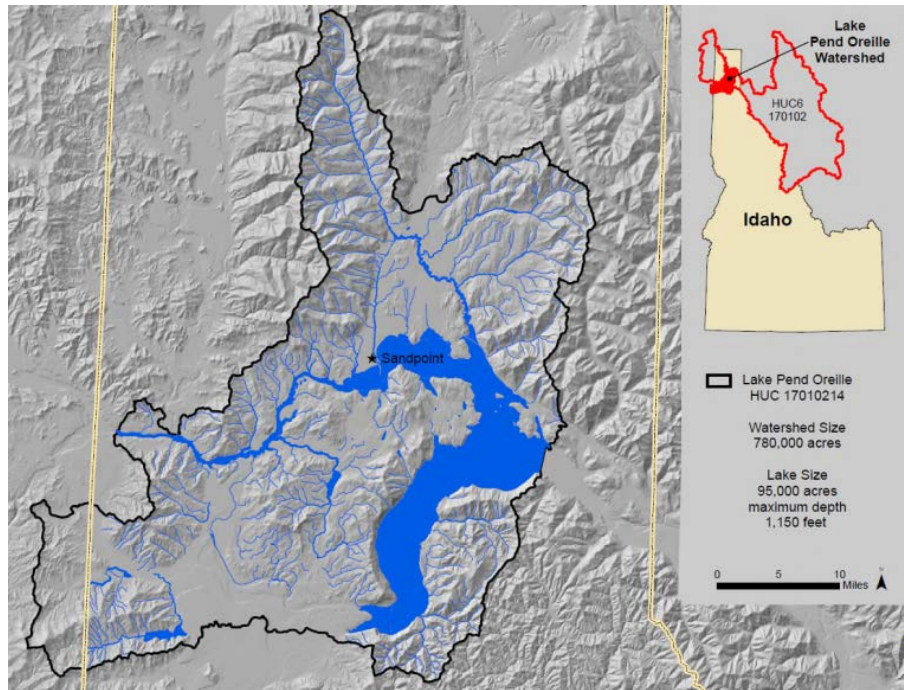


Figure 10 - Lake Pend Oreille Subbasin

# Wetlands & Riparian Areas

According to photo-interpretation data from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Freshwater Emergent wetlands and certain classes of Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetlands may be found in various areas of the city. Many areas identified, however, may have limited federal jurisdiction, specifically for those areas that do not have a "continuous surface connection" to navigable waters<sup>9</sup>.

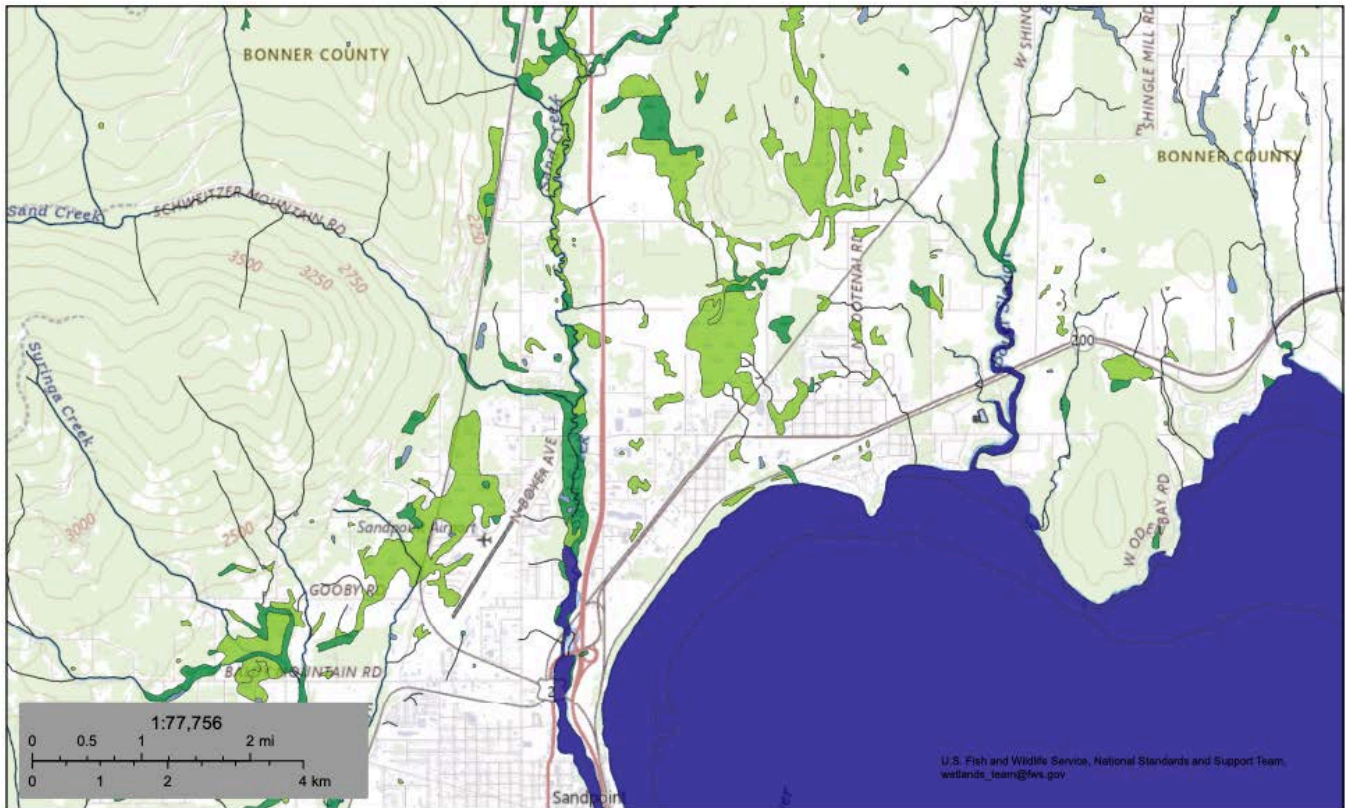


Figure 11 - National Wetlands Inventory

<sup>9</sup> Sackett Et Ux. V. Environmental Protection Agency Et Al.

# Hazardous Areas

## Historic Panhandle Smelting & Refining Company

Locally known as “Black Rock”, the area at the north end of the Ponderay Bay Trail at the lake’s edge is the site of the *Historic Panhandle Smelting & Refining Company brownfield site*. A brownfield site can be defined as “...real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant.” Efforts have long been underway for a cleanup effort which, with the implementation of the lakeshore connection project, would enable safe waterfront access for the Ponderay Community. Known contaminants at the site include high levels of lead and arsenic. The city received an EPA Brownfields Multipurpose grant in 2019 to assess and clean up the site, and efforts are ongoing.

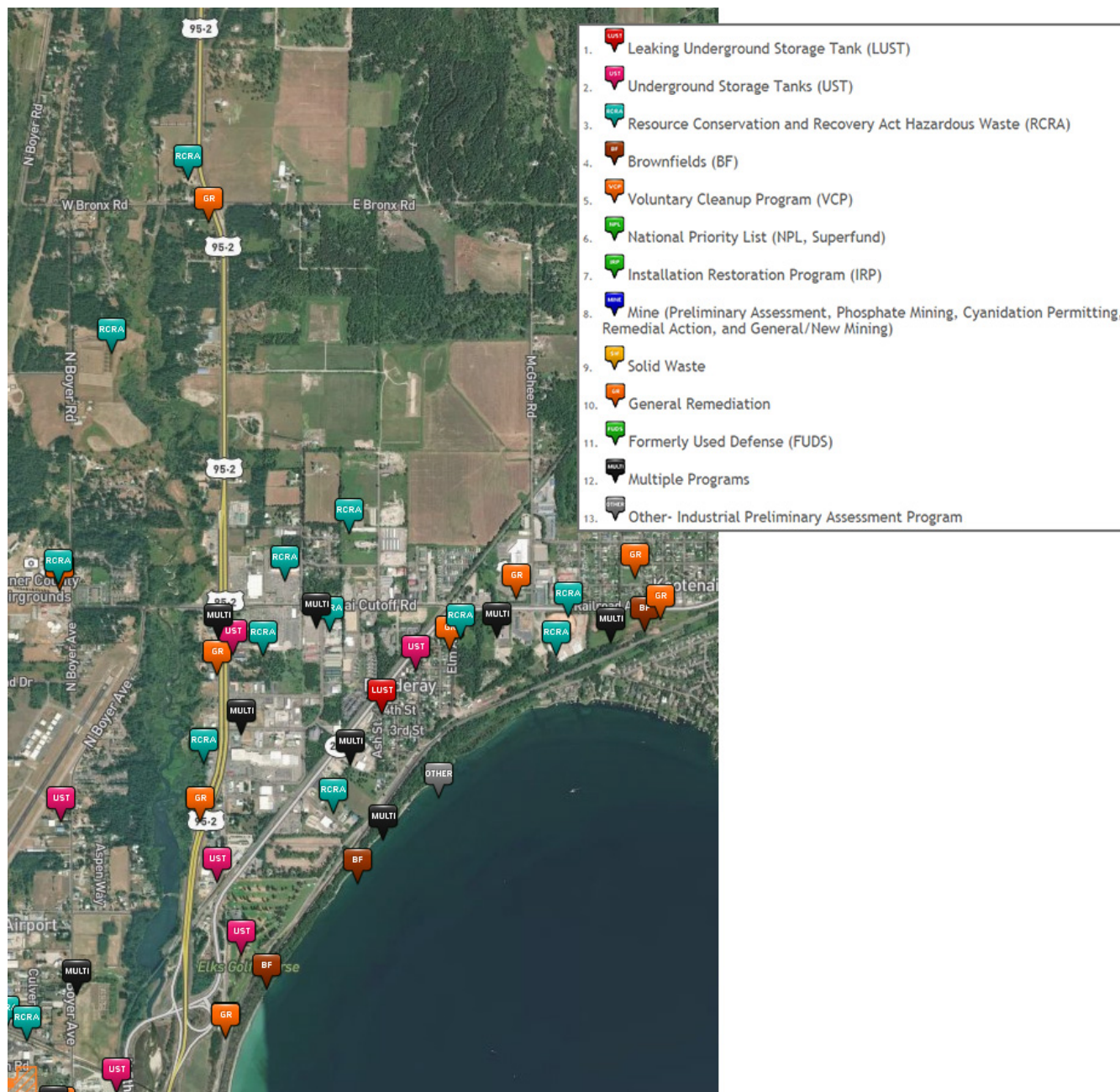


Figure 12 – The slag heap at the water’s edge commonly known as “Black Rock” (Photo: Final report for Remediation and Work plan prepared by Alta Science & Engineering, Inc.)



## Other Remediation Sites

The IDEQ Waste Management and Remediation Division Facility Mapper provides information on known remediation sites which can be viewed at <https://idaho.terradex.com/>. The following figure provides a snapshot of known remediation sites in Ponderay and the surrounding area.



# Agriculture

Prime farmland in Bonner County encompasses nearly 90,000 acres of the approximately 1.1 million acres total according to the 2017 USDA Census of Agriculture. According to Bonner County's 2023 Comprehensive Plan Agriculture Component update, small-scale farming has grown significantly within the County. Small acreage farming provides families with the opportunity to supply food for their families and sell surplus either at a market or on-site at a food stand but may not be the families sole source of income. While the number of smaller farms has grown, larger farms (50+ acres) within the county have stayed relatively constant<sup>10</sup>. Maintaining lands in the region for agricultural purposes is vital for the local economy and helps safeguard local food sources despite any external market shocks that may occur.

Directing new growth within cities, where urban services are available is one way to help ensure viable agricultural lands may be preserved for future generations. Consistent with the purpose of Idaho's Local Land Use Planning Act (LLUPA)<sup>11</sup>, most of the area within undeveloped areas of Ponderay are envisioned to help absorb new growth that may occur, thereby helping to preserve and protect areas outside of the city for agricultural use. North of Bronx Rd. within the city limits of Ponderay, however, is one exception where larger lots are envisioned to be maintained as more rural.



*Growth pressures within the region could pose a threat to surrounding natural areas and working lands that can have negative impacts on a broad array of issues, including fiscal, economic, as well as overall quality of life and community health. If growth is not accommodated within cities, development may happen in surrounding areas that could put additional strain on service costs with less city tax base to support them. Working agricultural and forest lands may also be jeopardized and risks from wildfire within the Urban Wildland Interface increased. Additionally, a growing body of research indicates that a lack of access to nature can have negative effects on childhood development. Should scenic and surrounding natural environments be reduced, physical and emotional health could be diminished over the long term.*

*Planning for Wildfire in the Wildland-Urban Interface: A Resource Guide for Idaho Communities (2016)*

*Last Child in the Woods: Saving our children from Nature-deficit Disorder (2008)*

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<sup>10</sup> Bonner County Comprehensive Plan 2023 Agricultural Component, [https://www.bonnercountyid.gov/media/Planning/Comp%20Plan%20Update/Agriculture%20\(v.10%20-%2005.24.23\)%20-%20Adopted%20Update.pdf](https://www.bonnercountyid.gov/media/Planning/Comp%20Plan%20Update/Agriculture%20(v.10%20-%2005.24.23)%20-%20Adopted%20Update.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> 67-6502, Idaho Code, <https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title67/T67CH65/SECT67-6502/>



# Recreation

The City of Ponderay is emerging as a recreational hub for the broader region. Although the city does not have a formally established Parks and Recreation Department, Ponderay has been able to acquire over 83 acres of property designated for recreational use which are at various stages of development. Below is a summary chart of recreational property owned by the City of Ponderay:

Recreational Property	Acres	Park Type
<b>Field of Dreams</b>	49.8	Regional Multi-purpose Recreation Complex
<b>McNearney Park</b>	3.6	Local Park with playground, story walk, bike skills loop and pump track
<b>Harbison Field</b>	9.05	Multi-purpose field, stage and event venue
<b>Pend d'Oreille Bay Trail</b>	21.89	3-mile waterfront trail connecting to Sandpoint (includes parcel acreage beneath high-water mark)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>84.4</b>	



Figure 13 - The pump track at McNearney Park (Photo: Aaron Qualls)

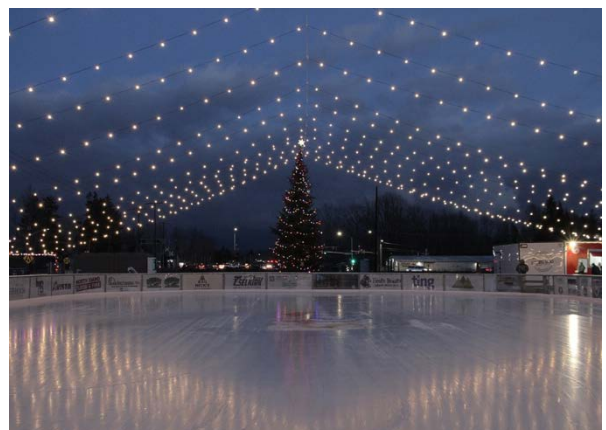
# The Field of Dreams

This 50-acre regional recreation complex property was acquired by the city in 2011, which was envisioned by Floyed McGhee and Mike Read on behalf of the Sandpoint Soccer Association as early as 1993. Funded by a 5-year 1% local option tax passed by city voters in 2019, Phase 1 of improvements were completed in 2024, which includes four, fully lit artificial turf sports fields restroom and concessions building and associated access and parking infrastructure.



*Figure 15 - Phase 1 of the Field of Dreams Multi-Phase Recreation Complex*

At the time of this plan's adoption, approximately one-third of the recreation complex has been completed. The unsuccessful reinstatement of the 1% local option tax may have delayed full buildout until funds can be obtained. Later phases of the complex are envisioned to include a field house, baseball/ softball fields, a four-season ice rink, playground and a pavilion. Additionally in later phases The Pond community skating rink will be relocated to the complex, which is currently located on existing city property at Kootenai Cutoff Road.



*Figure 14 - "The Pond" Ice skating rink  
(Photo: Eric Welch, Bonner County Daily Bee)*





Figure 16 - Overall Concept for the Field of Dreams Recreation Complex

## McNearney Park

Located on McNerney Road behind the animal shelter, this neighborhood park provides a playground, with a swing set and play structure, bike skills track, pump track, and story-book walk. Bathrooms are located on site and on-street parking and a few gravel off-street parking spaces are available.



*Figure 17 - Play equipment within McNerney Park (Photo: Aaron Qualls)*



## Harbison Field

Harbison Field is located Southeast of Highway 200 behind the Hoot Owl Café and adjacent to Railroad Avenue. Its central location to city neighborhoods both to the north and south, along with city-owned waterfront parcels on the other side of railroad tracks for which an underpass is envisioned make this park a focus for further amenity development. With help from the Trust for Public Lands, 6.5 acres of the field was originally acquired by the city. Since, the field has been expanded to a total of 9.05 acres, after acquisition of the adjacent parcel by the city in 2025. The field is primarily vacant land, but for a shade structure/stage at the southwestern corner of the property. Annually in September, the park hosts the popular Ponderay Neighbor Day community event.



*Figure 18 - Ponderay Neighbor Day 2024 at Harbison Field (Photo: Aaron Qualls)*



# The Front Yard Project & Ponderay Bay Trail

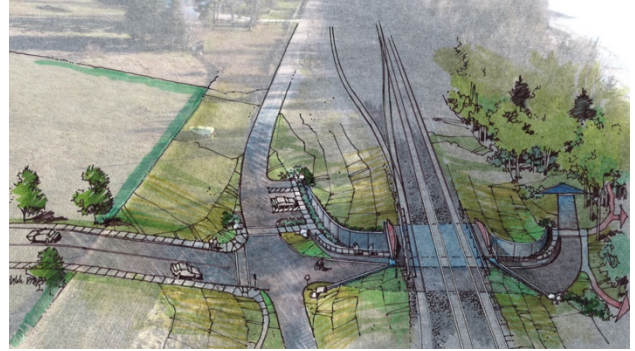
At the southern edge of Harbison Field, the BNSF railway runs along the lake shore until it funnels at Sandpoint before reaching the Long Bridge. Just beyond this railway from the field is the Ponderay Bay Trail which is a 3-mile trail that leads to the City of Sandpoint. Currently, safe and legal access to the trail is only achievable from Sandpoint. Connecting the trail safely to Ponderay, opening access to the lake, and eventually connecting to the neighboring City of Kootenai has long been envisioned by the broader community and led by a variety of partners. Ponderay's "Front Yard Project" builds from and folds in several initiatives that have involved local jurisdictions, state and federal agencies, and local organizations, which would provide waterfront access to the City of Ponderay and realize the long-held vision of the Ponderay Bay Trail connecting to Ponderay's neighborhoods and, eventually to the City of Kootenai.



Figure 19 - Harbison Field looking Sought (Photo: Aaron Qualls)



**The vision of The Front Yard Project brings the Lakeshore Connection Project, the "Blackrock" Brownfield clean-up effort, and the Ponderay Bay Trail—into one long-awaited connecting milestone that, once realized, would increase health, safety and the quality of life for the City Ponderay and the broader urban area of Bonner County.**



*Figure 20 - Early concept for a RR underpass (Image: Dell Hatch)*



*Figure 21 - Ponderay Bay Trail (Photo: Aaron Qualls)*



## Sand Creek

Along the city's western edge exists another potential for improving quality of life for the City and broader region that would necessitate close cooperation and support from affected landowners and careful consideration of riparian habitat. Largely hidden from view to the passer-by along Highway 95 behind existing commercial development is Sand Creek. A popular kayak and paddleboarding route, access is currently limited from the City of Ponderay. The potential for trail continuation or additional access points north of "Popsicle Bridge"—the connection point from the City of Ponderay and Sandpoint—may create value-added benefits to the city, property owners, and the broader area. Balancing water quality and sensitive riparian and wildlife habitat with property rights and community preferences should be carefully considered for any trail or other recreational amenity planning effort.



Figure 22 - Sand Creek looking north with the existing Creekside Trail and Popsicle Bridge in the background (Photo: Jasper Gibson)



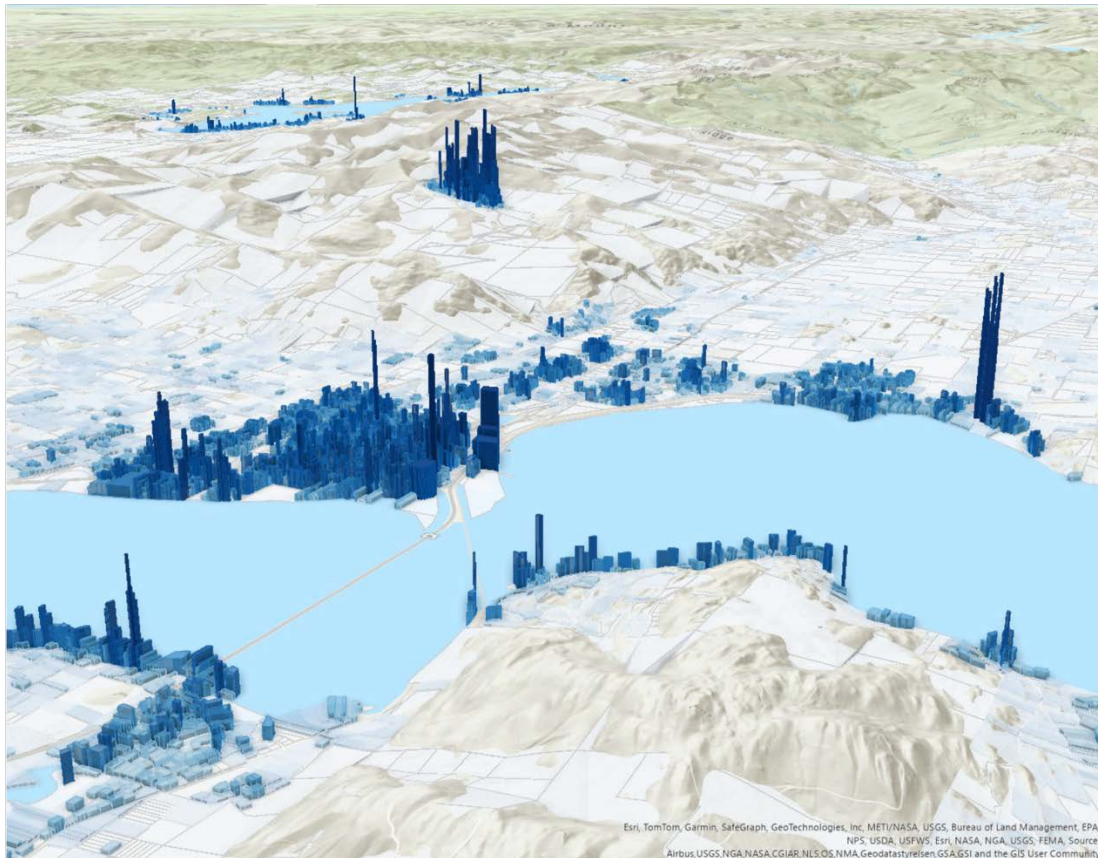
*Lake Pend Oreille is central to the city's identity and represents an unrealized opportunity for public access. Proximity to a variety of recreational amenities, including Sand Creek, trails, and parks, corresponds to increased physical activity, less stress, and less risk of obesity among youth and adults. Enhancing opportunities for outdoor recreation may also create economic growth through tourism and business attraction.*

*Role of Parks and Recreation on Health and Wellness (NRPA)*

*How Outdoor Recreation Supports Rural Economic Development (2019).*

# Land Use Value Per Acre Analysis

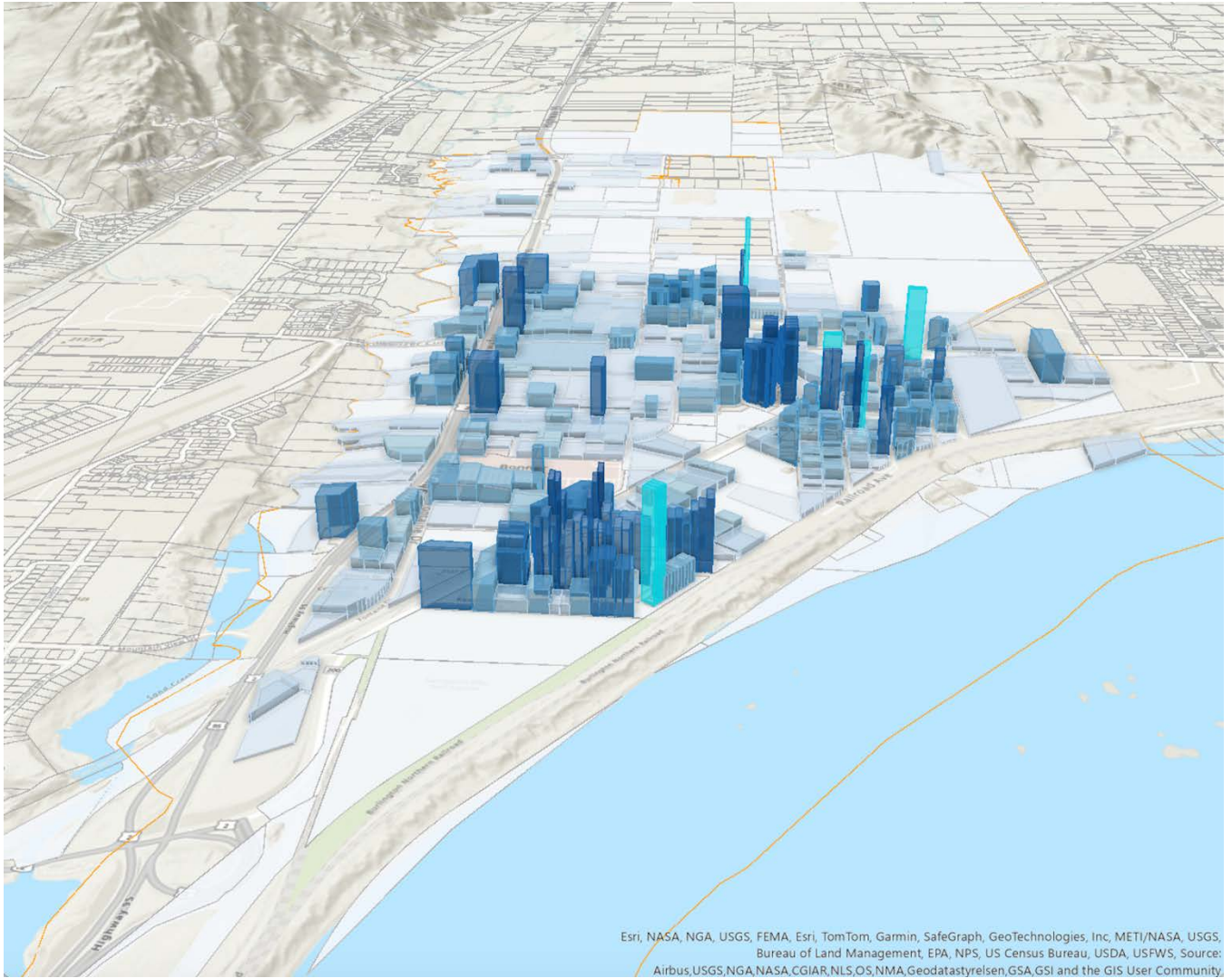
The State allocates sales tax revenue within Idaho based on population, which severely limits smaller Idaho cities in funding basic services and infrastructure through sales tax alone, unless residents choose to pass a local sales tax as a ballot measure<sup>12</sup>. Therefore, despite Ponderay's significance as a regional commercial hub, very little sales tax generated in Ponderay returns to the city. Property taxes are therefore relied on heavily to fund and maintain streets, parks and recreation, emergency services, utilities, and administrative services. Efficiency in land consumption is thus an important consideration for future land use and fiscal balance. Although tax revenue in absolute numbers may vary, the assessed value per acre analysis below indicates where value is generated compared to the amount of land used. Somewhat analogous to miles per gallon for vehicles, the examination helps to indicate the degree to which certain development patterns contribute to city revenue. It should be noted however, that while the analysis indicates existing property tax revenue streams, it does not examine the cost of services on a per parcel basis. In the below maps, the darker and taller 3D map graphs show which properties are assessed at a higher value relative to the size of the parcel.



*Figure 23 - Value Per Acre Analysis of Surrounding Area*

<sup>12</sup> <https://tax.idaho.gov/taxes/sales-use/sales-tax/local-sales-tax/city-sales-tax/>





*Figure 24 - Value per Acre Analysis within Ponderay*

# Population Projections

Four projections were considered for this planning horizon to the year 2050:

- Low:** 2.8% annual growth, mirroring county growth from 2018-2023
- Medium:** 5.1% annual growth, mirroring city growth from 2017-2021
- Medium-High:** 6.3% annual growth, mirroring city growth from 2019-2023
- High:** 14.7% annual growth for 5 years based on recent permit data, then 5.1% annual growth (medium growth rate)

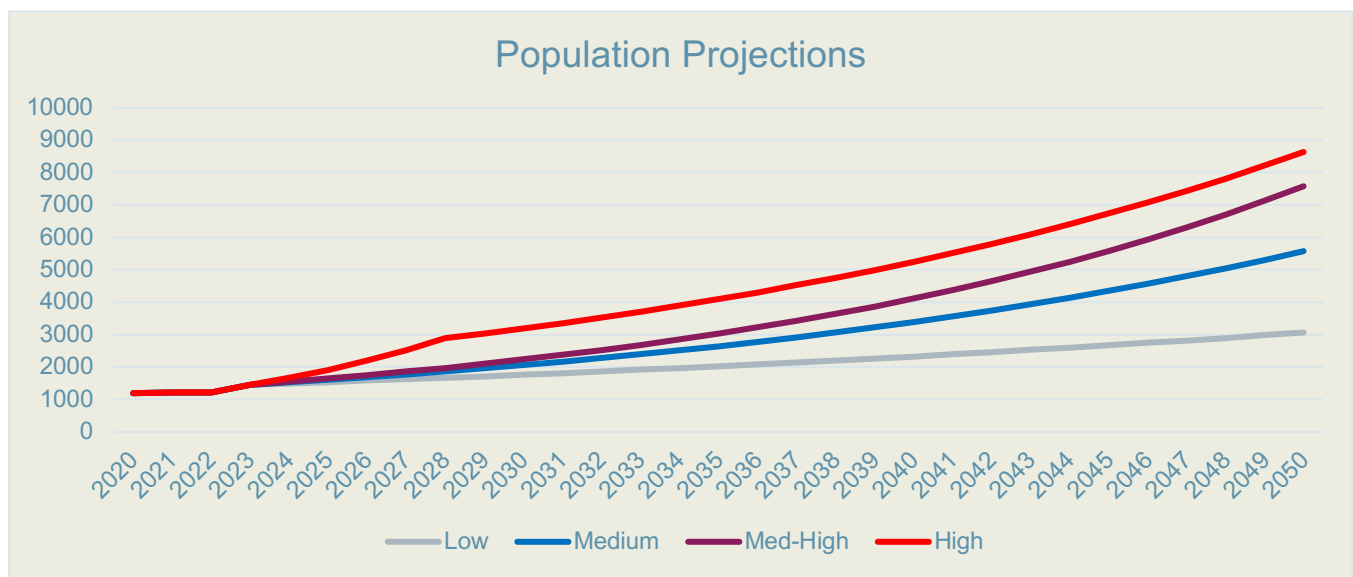


Figure 25 – Population Projections

# Public Meetings & Engagement

Community feedback is the 'north star' of a comprehensive plan. The vision for the City of Ponderay and its future is inextricably linked to the public's voices. With the meaningful and ample engagement opportunities, a vision can be greater than the sum of individual interests.



*Figure 26 - Community members were given 8 pennies to spend on Ponderay planning priorities at the grand opening for the Field of Dreams Phase 1 (Photo: Ben Olson)*



Throughout this plan update, various issues, opportunities, desires, and needs were expressed by the community and cataloged through multiple efforts and community events. Regular meetings with the Planning and Zoning Commission and touchpoints with the City Council were also held throughout. Below is a summary of all engagement efforts. Below is a summary of the results obtained. Informed by these results, along with the data collected at the onset of this effort, the vision, goals, and policies were crafted, further vetted and refined by the Planning Commission and the City Council before adoption.

<b>Timing</b>	<b>Engagement Activity</b>
<b>2/8/24</b>	Kickoff with City Council and Planning Commission Project overview, and visioning exercise with decision makers
<b>2/24 – 9/24</b>	Community, Agency, and Service District Interviews
<b>3/14/24</b>	Planning Commission Community Profile Key Findings Overview of key findings and upcoming public engagement events
<b>5/4/24</b>	Ponderay Bike Rodeo Engagement Booth with Info Boards, Penny Poll and Feedback Map
<b>5/9/24</b>	Planning Commission Meeting Preliminary engagement feedback, population projections and visioning
<b>6/9/24</b>	Ponderay Clean Up Day Engagement Booth with Info Boards, Penny Poll and Feedback Map
<b>6/24-7/24</b>	Community Survey Online 29-question survey
<b>8/29/24</b>	Field of Dreams Ribbon Cutting Engagement Booth with Info Boards, Penny Poll and Feedback Map
<b>9/5/24</b>	Planning Commission Meeting Community feedback review and existing policy analysis
<b>9/14/24</b>	Ponderay Neighbor Days Future land use scenario boards with scorecard feedback
<b>2/20/25</b>	Planning Commission Meeting Future Land Use workshop
<b>3/13/25</b>	City Council and Planning Commission Review of vision, goals, policies, and future land use
<b>5/5/25</b>	City Council update and map refinements
<b>5/8/25</b>	Planning Commission update and refinement
<b>6/12/25</b>	Planning Commission document review
<b>7/24/25</b>	Public open house and Planning Commission public hearing
	City Council adoption



# A Penny for Your Thoughts

Participants were given 8 pennies to spend on planning priorities by placing them in jars at the engagement booth table, each representing a long-range priority for the city to consider. Individuals were offered the choice to spend all pennies on one priority or divide them up however they saw fit but were able to spend no more than the 8 pennies given. This exercise is in part intended to mimic the tradeoffs that the City Council may face when budgeting. Approximately 103 participants over the course of three in-person events from 5/5/24-8/29/24 participated. The priorities offered were as follows:



**Enhancing Ponderay's Small town feel** - Enhancing public spaces and requiring new development to respect and enhance Ponderay's small-town feel.

**Abundant parking** - Ensure Ponderay's commercial areas have parking available to always accommodate maximum demand.

**Walking & Biking Infrastructure** - Provide more pathways and sidewalks to key destinations within the city.

**Connected Streets** - Provide additional street connections for local traffic to relieve congestion and make travel distances shorter.

**School Facilities** - Coordinate with LPOSD and other partners to provide new educational facilities and opportunities for Ponderay's youth.

**Utilities** - Ensure water, sewer, and stormwater systems can keep pace with demand.

**Local Hubs (Third Places)** - Encourage small, neighborhood-serving local businesses such as cafes, delis, corner stores, pubs, etc. close to or within neighborhoods.

**Other** - Write in your priority!

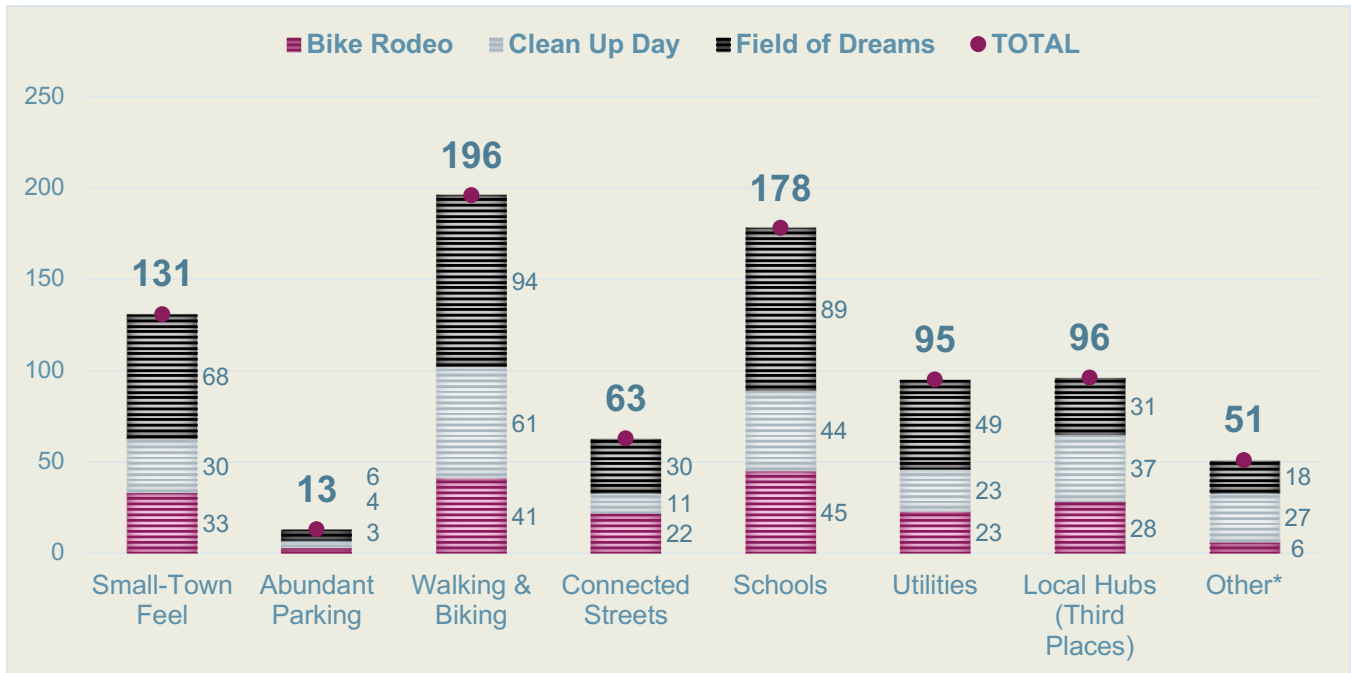


Figure 27: Comprehensive Penny Poll Results

*\*Other Identified Priorities:*

*Repair streets - Funding for Parks - Increased density and less sprawl - Clearly defined city end where rural begins - 24-hour food options - Bridge / walking to bay trail (safety) - Parks/playgrounds for kids - Indoor center that offers memberships with pool, track, fitness (like Croc center in CDA) - Ice skating rink will be awesome! - Parks - Leverage Natural spaces/forest - Amphitheater for Music Festivals - Kindness towards homeless people - Homes for the old - Tree protection / Parks, shade / Urban forests and open space - Covered ice rink*

**Over the course of the three events (Ponderay Bike Rodeo, Ponderay Cleanup Day, and the Field of Dreams Ribbon Cutting) the most popular priorities expressed were “Walking and Biking”, “Schools”, and maintaining Ponderay’s small town feel.**

# Feedback Map

Along with the Penny Poll, participants were offered the chance to provide comments directly on an enlarged parcel map of the city. Below is the resulting image of those geographically focused comments:





## Orientation Interviews

Early in the planning process and at various other stages of plan development, informal interviews with property owners, service districts, and residents helped to establish or confirm key priorities and known constraints. Themes expressed included utility (water and sewer) constraints, the emergence of new families within Ponderay's neighborhoods, the opportunities and challenges with siting a public school within the city, the lack of new commercial development design standards, and the careful balance needed between both industrial and commercial development and between a variety of housing types to ensure workers can live in town while also ensuring the character of existing neighborhoods is not jeopardized from out-of-scale new development.

## Community Survey

To gather additional and more detailed public feedback outside of community events, an online 29-question survey was created using the Alchemer platform and was available to the public from early June, 2024 through the end of July 2024. The online survey was intended to gain community input on their vision for Ponderay's future. With a total of 96 respondents, approximately one-third answered all questions provided, with the remainder partially completing the survey.

### Who Responded?

**Survey respondents were longtime residents, property owners, business owners, workers, people who come for recreation and occasional visitors.**

The vast majority of survey respondents answered they own or operate a business in the City of Ponderay (42.9%) with more than 30 (31.4%) stating that they own property in the city. A significant portion of the survey (28.6%) consists of people who commute to Ponderay for work but do not live there. This underscores the town's role as a job center, attracting workers from neighboring areas. With just a slightly lower percentage of 25.7 people living in Ponderay year-round. The remaining percentage come to Ponderay for an occasional visit or just to shop. The data above indicates a strong presence of business and property owners, which highlights the town's significance as a commercial hub and investment destination. All the respondents indicated that they have lived in Ponderay between 1 and 5 years. Most (60%) answered they have no dependent children living in their household.

### Key Takeaways

#### Preserving/Enhancing the small-town feel in Ponderay

Survey respondents indicated an interest in preserving Ponderay's small-town feel. A significant portion of the respondents indicated that they agree or strongly agree (55.8%) that Ponderay is a year-round, tight-knit community where neighbors, young and old, know each other and look out for one another. The words that were mentioned the most when respondents were asked to describe the city in one or two words were Small Town Feel. A strong majority of respondents (over 55.8%) expressed satisfaction with the city's preservation of its

*"Small and actual down to earth people"*

*—public comment*

small-town feel. 32.4% of the respondents indicated that a change or loss of community character is their biggest concern with growth in Ponderay. This overwhelming sentiment indicates a clear and widespread desire among community members to maintain the city's small-town character.

### Safe and Comfortable Transportation for All Users

The survey reveals a strong community interest in alleviating traffic congestion and promoting active transportation. This is evident from numerous responses mentioning the desire for:

- Better bike lanes/infrastructure
- Improved road connectivity
- Safe and accessible biking and walking paths throughout the community.
- A walkable downtown area

*It would be great if there was a way to walk or bike across Hwy 200 safely along Eastgate Way"*  
—resident comment

*"Like to see better, road connectivity, and more pathways in our community."*

*"A real walkable downtown core stretching from sand creek to LPO and revitalizing Bonner Mall."*  
—public comment

A significant concern was expressed about the relationship between growth, safety, and mobility. 67.6 % of the respondents indicate that their biggest concern regarding growth in Ponderay is Traffic. This was the largest concern for growth in Ponderay followed by loss of community character (32.4%), land cost and livability (24.3%), Environmental impacts (21.6%) with cost of service (18.9) being the least concern among these.

Preferences suggest a potential shift towards a more pedestrian-oriented and bike-friendly community with more street connections to better disperse vehicular traffic. Residents appear interested in creating a more vibrant and connected town where walking and cycling are safe and attractive options for daily errands and recreation. As indicated above, some comments mention traffic

congestion as a concern. This could be an indicator that residents are looking for alternative transportation options to alleviate traffic issues.

### Adequate housing types that can serve residents and workers.

There is a need for a variety of housing options in Ponderay to meet the needs of both current residents and workers. While a significant portion (around 55%) of respondents indicated that housing is somewhat attainable or that workers can find attainable housing, there is also a noteworthy portion (around 45%) who expressed concerns about affordability. Looking at the specific types of housing preferred by the community, single-family homes are the most desired option, with over 65% of respondents indicating a preference for them. However, there is also a clear interest in a variety of other housing options, including townhouses, apartments,

*"Housing just needs to be more affordable for what our wages are."*  
—public comment

ADUs, duplexes, and tiny (or small) homes. This indicates that the community recognizes the need for housing options that cater to different needs and preferences. Overall, the response shows that the Ponderay community desires a mix of housing types that can accommodate residents and workers with varying needs and budgets. This variety is likely to be important in attracting and retaining a workforce that can support the town's commercial and emerging recreational hub status.

### Improve and enhance infrastructure to meet the current population needs.

Respondents repeatedly mentioned traffic congestion, walking and biking infrastructure, and school facilities as major concerns or needs. Broadly, infrastructure was perceived as the most significant barrier to further economic development. Many respondents expressed a desire for a more vibrant downtown area with increased walkability and bike-friendly infrastructure.

While water and sewer infrastructure are not specifically asked about, water system conveyance and sewer system capacity are known issues that will impact future growth potential.

### Third Places

*“working on true ‘third places’ would be great along with having a gym with a daycare”.*

*—public comment*

Some notable requests in the survey were for “third places”, or informal gathering spots. While a significant portion of residents agree that such places exist, a combined 47.3% either disagree or are neutral. This suggests a potential shortfall in community spaces that foster social interaction and a sense of belonging.



*Growth pressures can raise fears of losing community solidarity. If lost, this can have a direct impact on overall community health. Known as the “Roseto Effect,” areas with cohesive community relationships can prolong life and reduce chronic illness, particularly with regards to heart disease.*

*(The Roseto effect: a 50-year comparison of mortality rates, 1992)*



## Other Takeaways and Comments

Very strong support was expressed by survey respondents for parks, recreation, open space, and trails. Some of those who provided comments advocated for more parks and paths. Several others would like to see more road improvements. There was also some general concern expressed within the comments for further allowance of high-density housing and some responses asked to limit fast food restaurants on US highway 95.

*“Do we want industry or families? Right now, the town feels heavy in the industrial department and lacking in neighborhoods and parks etc.”*

*—public comment*

*“More parks and paths! Along Sand Creek and one through the new downtown from the Sand Creek to the lakeshore...”*

*—public comment*

*“Stop more vacation rentals.”*

*—public comment*

Respondents were also asked to provide one or two adjectives that best describe what they like best about Ponderay in its current form as well as a second question asking what aspects of Ponderay they would like to see changed or improved. In the following “word clouds”, most common responses appear larger and bolder, indicating their shared importance among respondents, while less common responses appear smaller and fainter, demonstrating that these responses were less widely shared among respondents.

Among the responses of what respondents like the best about Ponderay today, the three largest words, and therefore most common, were “Small”, “Town”, and “feel”. Other notable responses include “Community,” “Potential,” and “Friendly.”



As for the responses of what about Ponderay respondents would like changed or improved, the largest and most frequently provided word by far was "Traffic." No other word came close to the frequency of "Traffic," but other notable words included "Better Access," and "Safety."



# Land Use Scenarios Feedback

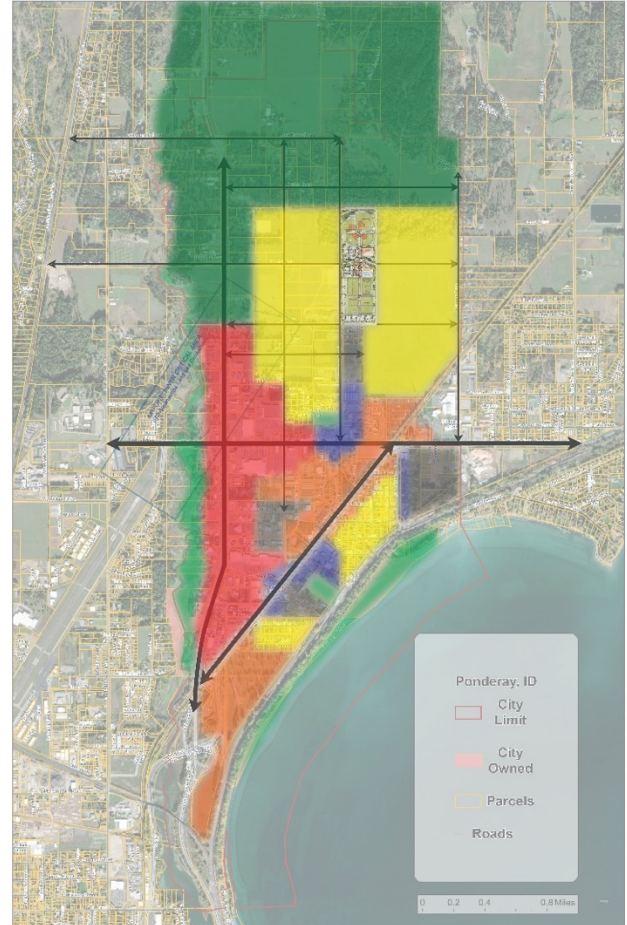
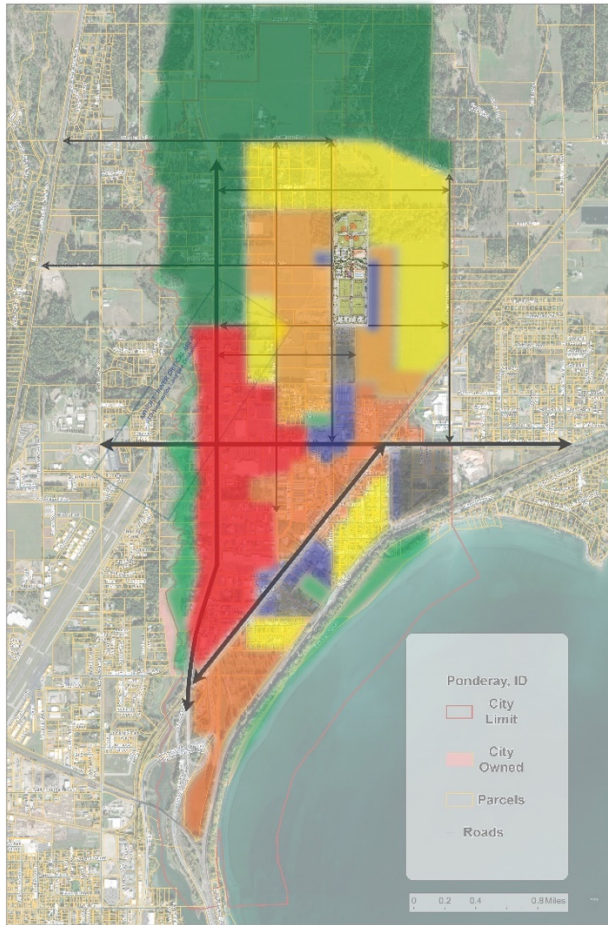
On September 14th, 2024, SCJ Alliance participated in the Ponderay Neighbor Day Festival at Harbison Field in the City of Ponderay. This annual community event provides opportunities for local vendors and organizations to engage with the public. We took advantage of the festival to gather feedback from community members on Ponderay's new comprehensive plan, which is currently in development.

Our focus during the event was to present two potential future land use scenarios primarily for vacant land in the northern part of the city, particularly near the Field of Dreams recreation complex.

- **Scenario 1** envisioned Ponderay growing with schools surrounded by housing, neighborhood shops, and live/work spaces. It included more intensive development around the Field of Dreams, establishing it as a regional hub.
- **Scenario 2** focused on a less intense development approach around the Field of Dreams, preserving the rural areas north of the city. This scenario proposed smaller schools with more localized functions, added live/work industrial spaces within existing commercial areas, and incorporated natural features and pathways in new neighborhoods.

We invited attendees to provide their feedback on these two land use scenarios. A total of 10 participants responded.





### Scenario 1

Scenario 1 envisioned Ponderay growing with schools surrounded by housing, neighborhood shops, and live/work spaces. It included more intensive development around the Field of Dreams, establishing it as a regional hub.

Average Participant Rating:  
**4.8 out of 10**

**30% of respondents  
preferred Scenario 1**

### Scenario 2

Scenario 2 focused on a less intense development approach around the Field of Dreams, preserving the rural areas north of the city. This scenario proposed smaller schools with more localized functions, added live/work industrial spaces within existing commercial areas, and incorporated natural features and pathways in new neighborhoods.

Average Participant Rating:  
**5.7 out of 10**

**70% of respondents  
preferred Scenario 2**

**Room for improvement:**

- Keeping industry near railroad
- Reducing high and medium-density housing
- Adding public green space
- Prioritizing road infrastructure to the Field of Dreams

**Room for improvement:**

- Preserving nature and green space
- Keeping industry near railroad
- Enhancing bike infrastructure
- Prioritizing higher-density housing clusters

## Scenario Input Takeaways

While the response rate at Neighbor Days was low compared to other community engagement efforts, valuable and detailed input was obtained from the few who did participate. While the majority of those who did engage expressed a preference for Scenario 2, which emphasizes less intensity, the engagement team did not hear from anyone that growth would or should not occur within the northern area of the city.

Most of the input was focused, rather, on how that growth may occur. Participants highlighted the importance of balancing development with nature, improving transportation infrastructure, and incorporating more sustainable transportation options like walking and biking paths. Suggestions also included optimizing housing density, keeping industrial areas near the railroad, and increasing public green spaces. Infrastructure improvements, including road connections and a new sewer plant, were also noted as key considerations for future development.

Taken with context of previous engagement efforts where modest support for a variety of housing types was expressed and housing affordability issues were acknowledged, and that active modes of transportation and the potential for a new school or schools was highly supported along with open spaces and trails, a resulting future land use map supported by the community may combine elements from the two scenarios presented.

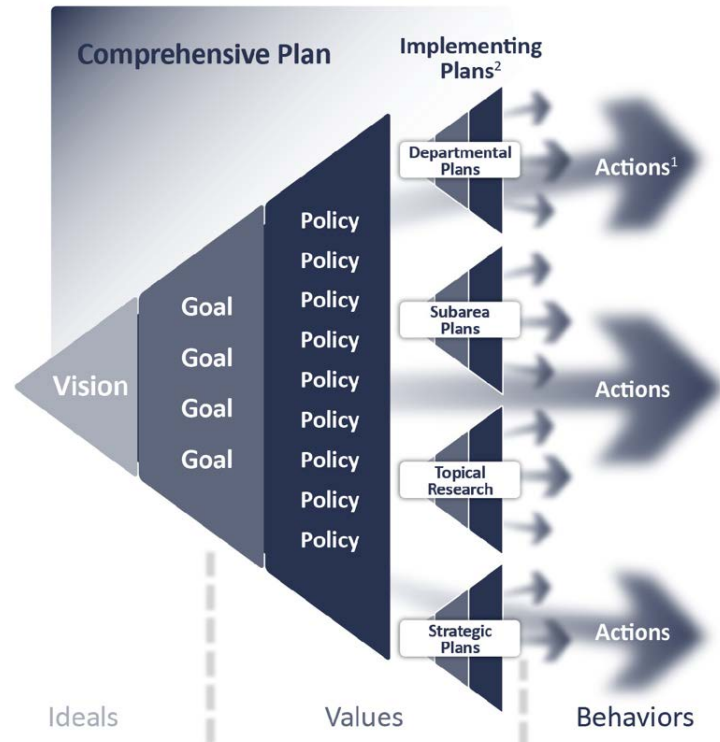
# Vision and Goals

Goals, objectives, and policies across various topics within a plan may be implemented through specific actions over time. Plan implementation is a required component, and therefore, additional steps following adoption may be essential, including the development of implementing studies, plans, simple inventories, or code updates to provide consistency between the plan's vision and land use regulations.

**Vision** – an aspirational, broad-brush summary of community objectives that underpins the plan's goals, policies, and actions.

**Goal**—Goals are broad statements indicating a general aim or purpose to be achieved. They are direction setters, ideal future ends, conditions, or states toward which planning and implementation measures are directed.

**Policy** – A policy is a topic-specific statement providing guidelines for current and future decision-making. It indicates a clear commitment by the local legislative body. A policy extends a plan's goals, reflecting topical nuance and assessing conditions.



Actions include programs, capital investments, regulations, etc.  
Examples only. Implementing plans may include a wide variety of plan types

**Action**—Actions are steps envisioned or undertaken to implement plan policies. They may include developing more detailed and localized plans, formal agreements, regulations, or other strategies.



# Vision Statement



The City of Ponderay is a year-round community where neighbors, young and old, know each other, support each other, and feel heard and included by community leaders. Ponderay is a regional commercial hub and emerging recreational destination, a center of innovation, and a place where families feel safe and connected. In Ponderay, local businesses thrive, and all residents can safely access their needs close by whether to recreate, work, go to school, shop, or connect with others.

# Goals

- 1. Ponderay's small town character is preserved and enhanced.*
- 2. The Identity of Ponderay is distinct and unique—built by and for Ponderay locals.*
- 3. Housing in Ponderay is attainable for a variety of income levels and for all life stages.*
- 4. Ponderay's transportation network is safe, convenient, and comfortable for all users and modes of travel.*
- 5. Ponderay's youth are provided the opportunity to attend school within city limits.*
- 6. Ponderay grows responsibly, with public facilities and services that can be sustained.*
- 7. Scenic, cultural, and natural resources are protected.*
- 8. Parks, open spaces, and recreational facilities are available for all ages and abilities and serve a variety of interests.*
- 9. Land use and development review is fair, predictable, consistent, and efficient.*
- 10. Ponderay is a hub of innovation and diverse industries where new and existing small businesses thrive.*
- 11. The health, safety, and quality of life of Ponderay residents is protected by maintaining clean air, soils, water quality and by minimizing pollution and hazard risks.*

# Future Land Use, Community Design, & Guiding Policies

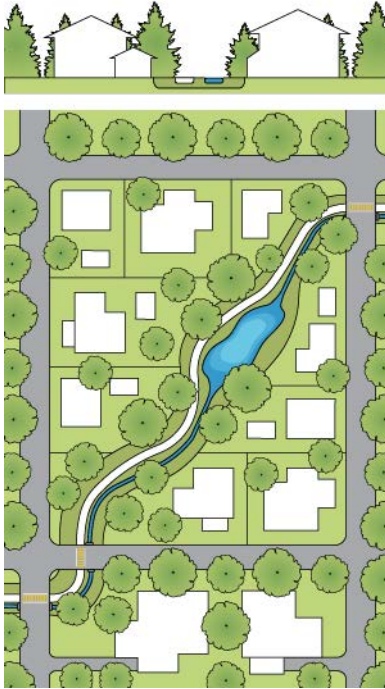
The Local Land Use Act (LLUPA) of the State of Idaho requires that “zoning districts shall be in accordance with the policies set forth in the adopted comprehensive plan.” Idaho Code 67-6511(1). Principally, a Comprehensive Plan serves as a legal basis for enacting zoning regulations. Any amendments to zoning shall occur only “after considering the comprehensive plan.” Idaho Code §67-6511(2)(b). Case law heard by the Idaho Supreme Court has emphasized that *zoning decisions do not have to strictly conform to the land use designations* within the comprehensive plan but that the governing board cannot ignore their comprehensive plan (Givens Pursley, 2021). Comprehensive plans, therefore, serve as a *general guide* for enacting zoning regulations.

The following future land use area descriptions and the associated map contains ten descriptions of land use areas. While some of these areas respond to existing development patterns, others envision the opportunity for some change over time as and if growth occurs and services become available.



# Future Land Use Area Descriptions

## Single-Family Greenways



*Example Image Only (Source: stock)*

These areas are reserved primarily for lower-density single family homes and accessory dwelling units where new development is thoughtfully integrated with drainage and preserved habitat. Waterways and open spaces are also enhanced with connecting pathways. Development standards should incentivize or require pathways, drainage, and open spaces designs to complement each other. Street layouts provide convenient circulation for all modes of travel through either a traditional or curvilinear grid pattern.

**Approximate Gross Density: 6 Units/Acre**

## Traditional Neighborhood



*Small lot development within Ponderay*

This area is specific to the older neighborhoods south of Hwy 2 and is characterized by a traditional grid street pattern and a variety of lot sizes to accommodate low to moderate density. Housing types may include single-family homes, ADUs, duplexes, triplexes, and modestly sized townhomes (i. e. up to approximately four connected townhomes). Height and massing of new development should be well integrated into the existing neighborhood fabric with respect to design, height, massing, and setbacks.

**Approximate Gross Density: 8 Units/acre**



## Medium Density & Cluster Housing



*Example Image Only (Source: stock)*

This area supports a concentration of families in proximity to the Field of Dreams sports complex and, potentially, a future school facility. Typical housing types include single-family homes, ADUs, cottages, townhouses, and small multi-family buildings up to sixplexes. Neighborhood parks, open spaces, drainage features, and pathways are encouraged and/or required.

**Approximate Gross Density: 10 Units/Acre**



### Master Planned Mixed Use

These areas may provided the option for negotiated development with a variety of housing types, recreational uses and amenities, along with large open green spaces. Strategically located neighborhood compatible retail and/or dining use may also be appropriately integrated, and consideration should be given to employee housing of any proposed commercial or resort enterprise that may be integrated on-site or in close proximity. Transportation access to and within this area should be integrated with adjacent areas so that connections for a variety of travel modes are accommodated. Greenway connections to other areas should be highly encouraged or required and drainage should be well integrated into site concepting.

## Parks, Open Space & Recreation



*Example Image Only (Source: stock)*

These areas are envisioned for preservation and recreation, which may be private, public, or a combination. Parks, open space, and trails within these areas may be established, emerging or envisioned which include existing city parks, the Field of Dreams sports complex, city-owned waterfront areas, and the east side of Sand Creek.

## Neighborhood Mixed Use



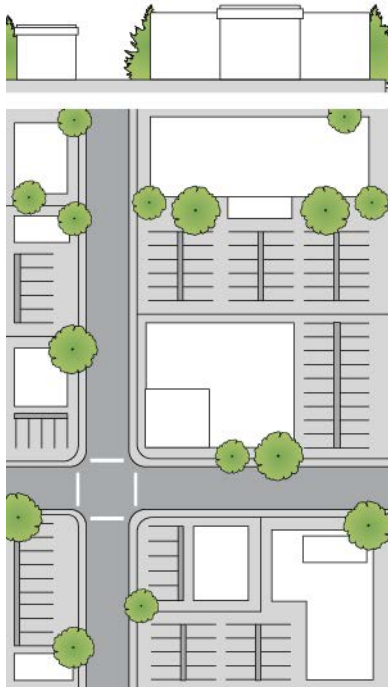
*The Hoot Owl Café*

These areas allow for small-scale, neighborhood-oriented commercial uses where residents living close by may have access to daily needs which also provide informal gathering spots. New development is pedestrian oriented with minimal or zero setbacks, parking is generally to the rear or side, and architectural detail breaks up facades of buildings to create a human scaled pattern for those on foot. Mixed use developments may also be encouraged through various incentives, which may include reductions in parking, increase in density, additional height, etc. In areas abutting the traditional developed neighborhoods south of Highway 200, traditional residential development is also envisioned.

**Approximate Gross Density: Varies**



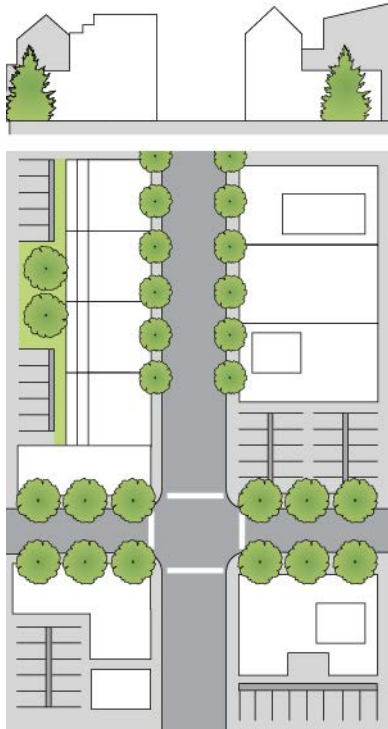
## Regional Commercial



*Example Image Only (Source: stock)*

This designation is intended to protect the regional commercial hub of Ponderay and is characterized primarily by large scale retail but may support a variety of small business opportunities. Most of this area is either adjacent to or near Hwy 95 or Hwy 200 and is therefore mostly highway-oriented in nature. As such, significant vehicle trip-generating uses for the region may be supported by existing transportation infrastructure. These areas also should be safely accessible for those on bike, foot or by transit. Transit routes and stops are thoughtfully integrated in order to maximize access to household needs.

## Commercial & Multi-Family Residential Mix



Alder Creek Townhomes on Larkspur St. (Photo: Aaron Qualls)

These areas serve a wide variety of small to medium scale commercial uses, along with some higher density residential infill and mixed-use buildings in proximity to a wide range of services and transit. This designation is generally reflective of how these areas have already developed. Certain light industrial uses within this designation may also be accommodated through special considerations, where impacts to surrounding uses may be appropriately mitigated.

**Approximate Gross Density: 18 Units/Acre**

## Industrial & “Live/Work” Spaces



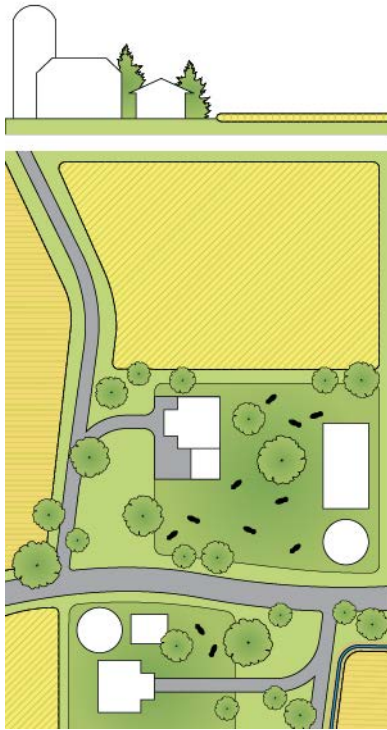
*Example Image Only (Source: stock)*

These areas accommodate light to medium industrial uses but not heavy industrial use, in support of primarily local businesses, and future economic development and innovation. Typical uses include shops for a range of uses, light manufacturing and product assembly. Living units may be incorporated on site to support worker housing and to provide added security for the primary business. Where residential use mixes with light and medium industrial uses, the quality of life, health, and safety of residents should be appropriately protected.

**Approximate Gross Density: Varies**



## Rural

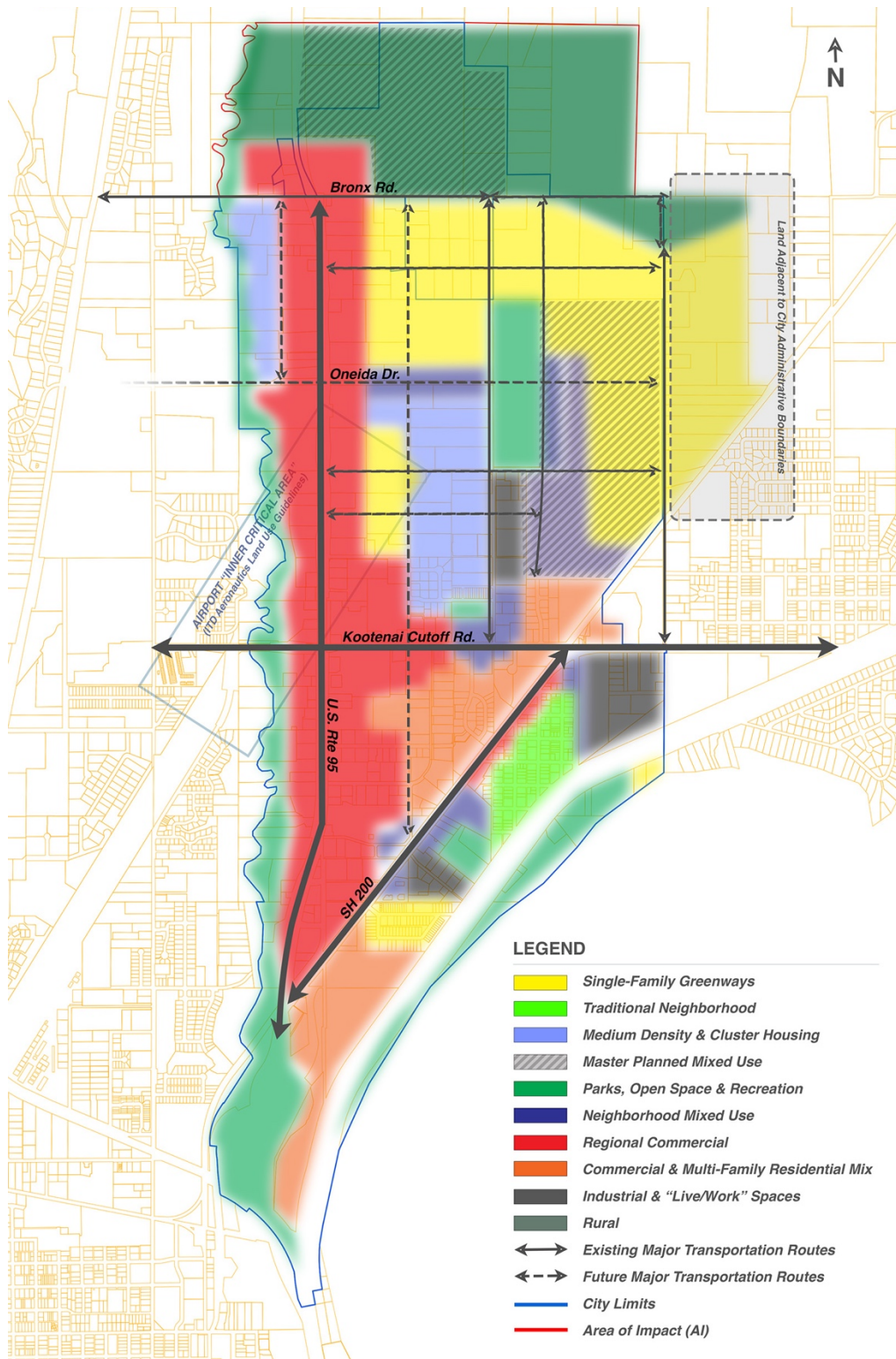


*Example Image Only (Source: stock)*

These areas are considerably larger in parcel size and are intended to preserve working lands. Wide open spaces should be abundant and divergent from urban areas—providing a distinct edge between rural and urban spaces. Should future urban growth need to be accommodated beyond this plan's horizon within these areas, urban services and a connected street network are made more feasible by maintaining sufficient areas to plan for.

**Approximate Gross Density: (One Unit per 15-20 acres)**

# Future Land Use Map



# Land Use Concept Renderings

To help envision what future buildout could look like through this plan's horizon, two concept renderings were produced showing what certain areas may look like with before and after imagery. The first area shows lands west of the Field of Dreams (Phase 1) which includes a school in proximity to the Field at Oneida Drive along with a variety of medium to low density housing, stormwater features, greenways, and neighborhood commercial uses. The second concept shows a re-imagining of existing parking areas along Bonner Mall Way in response to community feedback about creating public/private places to gather that are walkable and bikeable from existing Ponderay neighborhoods.

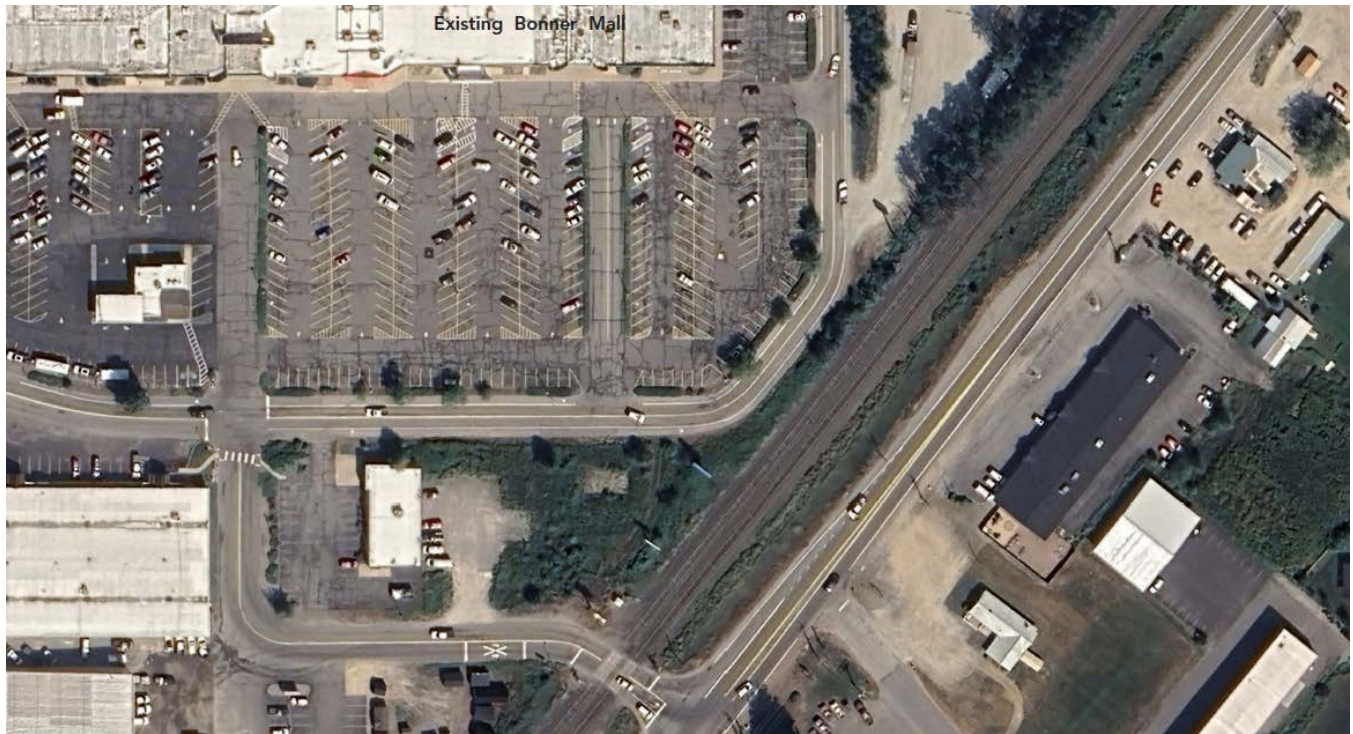


## Concept 1 – West of Field of Dreams Rendering





## Concept 2 – Bonner Mall Way Site View





## Concept 2 – Bonner Mall Way Rendering





# Policies

	COMMUNITY CHARACTER & DESIGN	LAND USE	HOUSING	TRANSPORTATION	RECREATION	PUBLIC SERVICES, FACILITIES & UTILITIES	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	NATURAL RESOURCES & HAZARDOUS AREAS	SPECIAL AREAS OR SITES	PROPERTY RIGHTS
GOAL 1: Ponderay's small town character is preserved and enhanced.										
<p><i>Ponderay residents support requiring new development to respect and enhance the city's small-town feel. In Ponderay, neighbors know and look out for each other—a key ingredient for a community's long-term health. The policies below are intended to protect, continue and enhance neighborhood character through careful attention to how new development occurs.</i></p>										
A. New development within existing residential neighborhoods should not be abruptly out of scale from adjacent structures.	✓		✓							
B. Locally oriented neighborhood commercial uses and informal community gathering spaces within walking distance to residential areas are encouraged.	✓	✓	✓							
C. Impacts from commercial uses such as noise, traffic, and lighting to adjacent residential uses should be mitigated through clear standards and permit review.	✓	✓		✓						
D. Maintain and update regulations, including zoning standards, to ensure industrial uses do not jeopardize the health, safety, or quality of life of residents.	✓									
E. The need for off-street parking should be balanced with providing small business opportunity, fiscal resiliency, and priorities for creating community gathering spaces.	✓	✓					✓			
F. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principals should be integrated into new development architecturally and through site planning.	✓		✓							

	COMMUNITY CHARACTER & DESIGN	LAND USE	HOUSING	TRANSPORTATION	RECREATION	PUBLIC SERVICES, FACILITIES & UTILITIES	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	NATURAL RESOURCES & HAZARDOUS AREAS	SPECIAL AREAS OR SITES	PROPERTY RIGHTS
G. Community events such as volunteer beautification events, community gathering events, block parties, and others in partnership with local organizations and community volunteers are encouraged.	✓	✓								

## GOAL 2: The Identity of Ponderay is distinct and unique—built by and for Ponderay locals.

*“You know you’re in Ponderay when...” This goal and policy set carries forward the previous comprehensive plan directive to enhance Ponderay’s small-town identity. Engagement efforts for this update indicated a preference to enrich public spaces and facilitate new opportunities for neighborhood hubs, public gathering spaces, and community events—furthering, at its best, community and civic pride.*

A. Special attention shall be given to the major entryways into Ponderay, ensuring a positive and “distinctly Ponderay” image for the community.	✓									
B. Branded wayfinding signage should be considered at key decision points for orienting residents and visitors to key recreational and other landmark destinations.	✓									
C. Ponderay’s central business district should be encouraged to provide a convenient, pedestrian-friendly, locally oriented, shopping and dining atmosphere.	✓	✓								
D. Areas and sites with historic, natural, and scenic value by the community shall be preserved, protected, and enhanced while respecting private property rights.	✓							✓	✓	
E. Advocate for the preservation of open space and working lands within the Area of Impact to maintain a clearly defined city edge, while also reducing service and environmental costs associated with low density sprawl.	✓	✓								

	COMMUNITY CHARACTER & DESIGN	LAND USE	HOUSING	TRANSPORTATION	RECREATION	PUBLIC SERVICES, FACILITIES & UTILITIES	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	NATURAL RESOURCES & HAZARDOUS AREAS	SPECIAL AREAS OR SITES	PROPERTY RIGHTS
F. Pedestrian-oriented architecture and site planning within mixed-use and neighborhood commercial areas are encouraged and/or required.	✓	✓	✓							
G. Development standards that provide opportunities for community interaction are encouraged.	✓	✓	✓							
H. The retention of natural drainage systems and wildlife corridors in coordination with pathway and trail planning is strongly encouraged.	✓	✓			✓			✓		
I. Interpretive signage or art features are encouraged at key public destinations, travel routes, and entry points.	✓									
J. Development standards for signage and landscaping appropriately complement Ponderay's small-town character.	✓	✓								

### GOAL 3: Housing in Ponderay is attainable for a variety of income levels and for all life stages.

*Providing a mix of appropriately scaled housing types that can accommodate residents and workers with varying needs and budgets is an important consideration as the city continues to grow. This variety is likely to be important in attracting and retaining a workforce that can support the town's commercial areas and emerging recreational hub status.*

A. Incentivize or require a variety of appropriately scaled housing types for all life stages and income levels in accordance with the future land use vision.		✓	✓							
B. Multi-family developments should be provided adequate open space and recreational amenities through site planning and permitting.	✓	✓	✓		✓					
C. Encourage housing types such as duplexes, triplexes, townhomes, cottage	✓	✓	✓							



	COMMUNITY CHARACTER & DESIGN	LAND USE	HOUSING	TRANSPORTATION	RECREATION	PUBLIC SERVICES, FACILITIES & UTILITIES	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	NATURAL RESOURCES & HAZARDOUS AREAS	SPECIAL AREAS OR SITES	PROPERTY RIGHTS
housing, and other appropriately scaled “missing middle” housing types in accordance with the future land use vision.										
D. Choices between ownership and rentals to accommodate a variety of households is encouraged.		✓	✓							
E. Provide allowance and encouragement for housing types that support Ponderay’s senior population, including aging-in-place homes, retirement communities, assisted living facilities, and smaller living spaces.		✓	✓							

#### GOAL 4: Ponderay’s transportation network is safe, convenient, and comfortable for all users and modes of travel.

*Community feedback indicated very strong support for safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle routes to existing and emerging key destinations. While some future projects may be led by the city in coordination with, and support from, regional partners, the policies below also support regulations that require new development to provide infrastructure in response to this priority. An increase in traffic congestion was also cited as an emerging concern by residents, particularly along major corridors for which alternative routes may not yet exist.*

A. Convenient and safe access for those on foot or bike along Hwy 200 and across Hwy 200 at or near Eastgate Drive should be accommodated through thoughtful design in coordination with ITD, UPRR, and affected property owners.				✓						
B. New development shall contribute to an interconnected, multi-modal network to disperse traffic, reduce congestion, maintain or improve emergency response times, and enhance convenient, safe travel for non-drivers.				✓						
C. Within residential and mixed-use areas, small to moderate sized blocks should be provided to make travel distances shorter.	✓			✓						

	COMMUNITY CHARACTER & DESIGN	LAND USE	HOUSING	TRANSPORTATION	RECREATION	PUBLIC SERVICES, FACILITIES & UTILITIES	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	NATURAL RESOURCES & HAZARDOUS AREAS	SPECIAL AREAS OR SITES	PROPERTY RIGHTS
D. Dead end streets should be avoided. Where a street connection is not feasible, connection points for those on foot or bike should be required if possible.	✓			✓						
E. Within mixed use and residential areas, adopted vehicle level of service standards should be considered carefully in context of all right-of-way users.	✓			✓						
F. Transportation planning efforts should be coordinated with the railroads, Idaho Transportation Department, Bonner County, the Independent Highway District, Utility Providers, and Neighboring cities.				✓						
G. Clear standards for street and pathway designs are provided for new construction.		✓		✓						

## GOAL 5: Ponderay's youth are provided the opportunity to attend school within city limits.

*At several engagement efforts for this planning process, community members, including and most notably Ponderay's youth, expressed that a school or schools within the city as a major need and desire. The policies below direct the city to partner with educational service providers, including the Lake Ponderay School District to encourage the siting of a school to which safe and convenient access may be provided for Ponderay families.*

A. Coordinate with the Lake Ponderay School District (LPOSD) and other partners to provide new educational facilities and opportunities for Ponderay's youth.						✓				
B. School sitings should occur, to the degree feasible, in proximity to where residents live, or are projected to live to help mitigate traffic impacts, bus system demands, and to provide feasibility for school children to arrive by foot or bicycle.		✓	✓			✓				
C. Use of city-owned athletic fields by existing or proposed public schools within city limits should be encouraged		✓				✓				

	COMMUNITY CHARACTER & DESIGN	LAND USE	HOUSING	TRANSPORTATION	RECREATION	PUBLIC SERVICES, FACILITIES & UTILITIES	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	NATURAL RESOURCES & HAZARDOUS AREAS	SPECIAL AREAS OR SITES	PROPERTY RIGHTS
<b>GOAL 6: Ponderay grows responsibly, with public facilities and services that can be sustained.</b>										
<i>Responsible growth must ensure that public services and facilities, including for water, wastewater, stormwater, streets, pathways, and parks/open spaces keep pace with demand and that new development pays its fair share to maintain adequate facilities and address service impacts.</i>										
A. Regularly review and amend capital improvement plans and potential funding sources.						✓				
B. Land use patterns should foster long-term fiscal health of the city.		✓				✓				
C. Ensure that utilities and services are provided concurrently with new or expanded development.						✓				
D. Developments must provide their fair share of public improvement costs to maintain acceptable service levels including for parks and open space, street improvements, pathways, stormwater treatment, and utility extensions.						✓				
E. Fees established for new development shall be based on the proportional impact of new development and have an essential nexus to serving the development.						✓				✓
F. Coordinate with the Kootenai-Ponderay Sewer District on large scale development projects, zone changes, and capital facility planning.						✓				
G. Development of vacant land close to existing services and amenities should be prioritized through incremental implementation of the future land use vision.		✓				✓				
H. Decisions regarding annexation should consider long term fiscal impacts on community services.		✓				✓				



	COMMUNITY CHARACTER & DESIGN	LAND USE	HOUSING	TRANSPORTATION	RECREATION	PUBLIC SERVICES, FACILITIES & UTILITIES	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	NATURAL RESOURCES & HAZARDOUS AREAS	SPECIAL AREAS OR SITES	PROPERTY RIGHTS
I. Urban services outside of city limits is strongly discouraged.		✓				✓				

## GOAL 7: Scenic, cultural, and natural resources are protected.

*Ponderay contains many scenic and natural resources that often go undiscovered due to limited access. Certain areas within and just outside of city limits are cherished for their environmental and scenic value. Other areas are also valued for their productive capacity as working lands. The below policies seek to enhance protection of critical areas and other natural assets valued by the community while also opening access for residents and visitors to experience them in a responsible manner. These policies are also intended to guide new development to respect existing natural features and to protect the surrounding rural character of Ponderay.*

A. Protect watersheds, significant cultural resources, and critical wildlife habitat from insensitive and detrimental development.	✓	✓						✓	✓	
B. Encourage new growth to occur in city limits and where infrastructure and services are available.	✓	✓				✓				
C. Strongly encourage the protection of working lands and open space within the Area of Impact.	✓	✓						✓		
D. Maintain viewsheds through the establishment or encouragement of greenbelts and pathways within newly proposed development.	✓	✓			✓					
E. Identify and protect natural features and areas of cultural significance.								✓	✓	
F. Work with property owners and conservation partners to protect the ecological features of Sand Creek and to provide opportunities for the public to experience it responsibly.					✓			✓	✓	

## GOAL 8: Parks, open spaces, trails, pathways, and recreational facilities are available for all ages and abilities and serve a variety of interests.

*Parks, recreation, open space, and trails are essential ingredients for community health, quality of life and economic development. Ponderay is emerging as a recreational hub for the region and as the city*

	COMMUNITY CHARACTER & DESIGN	LAND USE	HOUSING	TRANSPORTATION	RECREATION	PUBLIC SERVICES, FACILITIES & UTILITIES	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	NATURAL RESOURCES & HAZARDOUS AREAS	SPECIAL AREAS OR SITES	PROPERTY RIGHTS
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*continues to grow, the below policies seek to maintain recreational amenities, preserve open spaces, and enhance trail networks to keep pace with demand in a responsible way.*

A. Support local and regional trail and pathway efforts in coordination with neighboring jurisdictions, local organizations, agencies, and property owners.	✓				✓					
B. Provide safe public access to the lakeshore.	✓			✓	✓	✓			✓	
C. Create and maintain walkable and bikeable access to city parks through infrastructure investments, development requirements, and land use decision making.	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓				
D. Ensure new parks and recreational facilities can be properly maintained or operated in perpetuity.						✓				
E. Ensure open spaces are preserved through the development review and in context of serviceability.	✓	✓			✓	✓				

## GOAL 9: Land use codes, development standards, and review procedures are fair, predictable, consistent, and efficient.

*Limited resources within a small city where significant growth is projected highlights the need for clear, predictable, and efficient processes. The below policies set guidelines to ensure that development regulations are clear and provide sufficient review but also that city resources are not over extended and that new development processes are not unduly subsidized by existing taxpayers.*

A. Clear standards for development are generally preferred over discretionary review processes.		✓								✓
B. Development standards may be modified or waived through a prescribed process where it can be shown community benefits would result, such as open space, fiscal resilience, environmental protection, public amenities, or workforce housing.		✓			✓			✓	✓	✓

	COMMUNITY CHARACTER & DESIGN	LAND USE	HOUSING	TRANSPORTATION	RECREATION	PUBLIC SERVICES, FACILITIES & UTILITIES	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	NATURAL RESOURCES & HAZARDOUS AREAS	SPECIAL AREAS OR SITES	PROPERTY RIGHTS
C. Where discretionary review is warranted, clear criteria exist for application completeness and decision making.										✓
D. Implementing development standards shall be reviewed periodically and updated as warranted.		✓								
E. Zoning and development standards shall be consistent with the future land use vision. Significant departures from the vision must be considered in concert with a change to the adopted comprehensive plan.		✓								
F. Fee schedules for development review shall reflect the city resources required for all phases of the approval process.		✓				✓				
G. Due process and public hearing procedures shall be clear, open, and with sufficient information to render a decision.		✓								✓

## GOAL 10: Ponderay is a hub of innovation and diverse industries where new and existing small businesses thrive.

*Ponderay has an exceptional reputation for being business friendly. As a result, a healthy mix of industries have thrived in Ponderay. Many, if not most, are small locally owned businesses. The policies below seek to continue this reputation and support further innovation and new opportunities. They also recognize that a city's quality of life with respect to housing choice, recreational amenities, and "place-making" is central to continuing and furthering economic development.*

A. Areas supporting regional commercial use and light to medium industrial uses are protected for job retention and creation.		✓					✓			
B. Worker housing is encouraged near or on site with commercial and light industrial uses when demonstrated the health, safety, and quality of life of the residents is protected.		✓	✓				✓	✓		
C. Improved quality of life in Ponderay is recognized as a core economic development strategy.	✓		✓		✓		✓			



	COMMUNITY CHARACTER & DESIGN	LAND USE	HOUSING	TRANSPORTATION	RECREATION	PUBLIC SERVICES, FACILITIES & UTILITIES	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	NATURAL RESOURCES & HAZARDOUS AREAS	SPECIAL AREAS OR SITES	PROPERTY RIGHTS
D. The diversification and expansion of compatible industries in Ponderay is encouraged.							✓			
E. Technical, vocational, and adult education opportunities for the benefit of Ponderay area residents and employers is encouraged.							✓			
F. Support new and existing local businesses through clear, predictable, and appropriate regulations.		✓					✓			✓
G. Encourage home occupations that are not disruptive to neighborhoods or the community at large.		✓					✓			✓

**GOAL 11: The health, safety, and quality of life of Ponderay residents is protected by maintaining clean air, soils, water quality and by minimizing pollution and hazard risks.**

*The below policies re-affirm the importance of appropriate life safety standards and provide guidance for regulations to protect health and quality of life in Ponderay and to mitigate risk from natural and man-made hazards.*

A. Cooperate with regulatory agencies, including but not limited to Idaho Department of Environmental Quality to identify and abate known environmental quality issues within the city.								✓		
B. Maintain and update regulations to ensure industrial and commercial uses are of appropriate intensity and located such that the quality of life of residents is not jeopardized.		✓						✓		
C. Maintain development regulations to ensure lighting from new development does not jeopardize the quality of life or health of residents.		✓	✓							
D. Ensure development activities employ best management practices for stormwater management and treatment to protect						✓		✓		

	COMMUNITY CHARACTER & DESIGN	LAND USE	HOUSING	TRANSPORTATION	RECREATION	PUBLIC SERVICES, FACILITIES & UTILITIES	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	NATURAL RESOURCES & HAZARDOUS AREAS	SPECIAL AREAS OR SITES	PROPERTY RIGHTS
groundwater quality and overall health and safety.										
E. Assure safe, durable buildings are developed through adoption and enforcement of life/safety codes to address natural and manmade risks such as fire, earthquake, wind, flooding, and slope stability.								✓		
F. New subdivisions incorporate wildfire resistance strategies.	✓		✓					✓		

# Action Plan

## Actors Key:

CS = City Staff

CC = City Council

PZ = Planning and Zoning Commission

CTY = County

ITD = Idaho Transportation Department

IHD = Independent Highway District

KPS = Kootenai Ponderay Sewer District

SP = City of Sandpoint

ORG = Organization & Agency Partners

	GOAL / POLICY REFERENCE	ACTORS	SCHEDULE
<p><b>1) Update development regulations within serviceable areas and codify them online for ease of review by the public, staff, and decision makers. Priority updates include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a table of permitted and conditionally permitted uses applicable to all zoning districts.</li> <li>• Revise/create zoning districts for Regional Commercial, Neighborhood Mixed Use, and Commercial &amp; Multi-family Residential Mix future land use areas.</li> <li>• Evaluate minimum off-street parking requirements for targeted infill areas.</li> <li>• Revise zoning for the Industrial &amp; “Live/Work” Spaces future land use areas.</li> <li>• Update development review procedures for clarity, predictability, and ease of use.</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>G1 Small Town Character</u></b> 1A-F</p> <p><b><u>G2 Ponderay Identity</u></b> 2C, 2F, 2G, 2H, 2J</p> <p><b><u>G3 Housing</u></b> 3A-E</p> <p><b><u>G4 Transportation</u></b> 4B, 4C, 4D, 4G</p> <p><b><u>G6 Public Facilities</u></b> 6B, 6C, 6D, 6F, 6G</p> <p><b><u>G7 Natural Resources</u></b> 7A, 7B, 7D, 7E, 7F</p> <p><b><u>G8 Parks &amp; Open Space</u></b> 8C</p> <p><b><u>G9 Standards &amp; Procedures</u></b> 9A-E, 9G</p> <p><b><u>G10 Econ Dev</u></b> 10A, 10B, 10C, 10F, 10G</p> <p><b><u>G11 Health &amp; Safety</u></b> 11B, 11C, 11D, 11E</p>	CS, PZ, CC	0-2 years
<p><b>2) Update subdivision standards with consideration given to the following:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Street classifications and design standards</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>G1 Small Town Character</u></b> 1F</p>	CS, PZ, CC	0-2 years



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dead end streets and cul-de-sacs</li> <li>• Pedestrian, stormwater, street trees, lighting, and greenway standards or incentives</li> <li>• Block lengths</li> <li>• Water and wastewater design standards</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>G2 Ponderay Identity</u></b> 2D, 2F, 2G, 2H</p> <p><b><u>G3 Housing</u></b> 3B, 3D</p> <p><b><u>G4 Transportation</u></b> 4B, 4C, 4D, 4E, 4G</p> <p><b><u>G6 Public Facilities</u></b> 6B, 6C, 6D, 6F</p> <p><b><u>G7 Natural Resources</u></b> 7A, 7D, 7E, 7F</p> <p><b><u>G8 Parks &amp; Open Space</u></b> 8C, 8D, 8E</p> <p><b><u>G9 Standards &amp; Procedures</u></b> 9A-D, 9G</p> <p><b><u>G10 Econ Dev</u></b> 10C</p> <p><b><u>G11 Health &amp; Safety</u></b> 11D, 11F</p>		
<p><b>3)</b> Complete brownfield cleanup efforts at the historic Panhandle Smelting and Refining Company site, commonly known and “Black Rock”.</p>	<p><b><u>G8 Parks &amp; Open Space</u></b> 8A, 8B</p> <p><b><u>G11 Health &amp; Safety</u></b> 11A</p>	<p>CS, CC, ORG</p>	<p>0-2 years</p>
<p><b>4)</b> Work with design partners, ITD, and UPRR to provide a safe crossing design solution close to Eastgate Drive for pedestrians and cyclists across Hwy 200.</p>	<p><b><u>G4 Transportation</u></b> 4A</p>	<p>CS, CC, ITD, IHD, ORG</p>	<p>0-2 years</p>

<p><b>5)</b> Update or develop Capital Improvement Plans (CIPs) as applicable, in accordance with Idaho Code § 67-8208 for transportation, water, sewer, stormwater, parks &amp; pathways, and public safety. Any corresponding Impact Fee Schedules should be updated in accordance with Idaho Code § 67-8204.</p>	<p><b><u>G6 Public Facilities</u></b> 6A, 6C, 6D, 6E</p>	<p>CS, CC, IHD, ITD, KPS, SP, ORG</p>	<p>0-5 yrs, ongoing</p>
<p><b>6)</b> Seek funding support for implementation of the Lakeshore Connection Project and include the project in the City CIP.</p>	<p><b><u>G1 Small Town Character</u></b> 1F, 1G</p> <p><b><u>G2 Ponderay Identity</u></b> 2A, 2B, 2D, 2F, 2G, 2H</p> <p><b><u>G4 Transportation</u></b> 4A, 4F</p> <p><b><u>G7 Natural Resources</u></b> 7A, 7E</p> <p><b><u>G8 Parks &amp; Open Space</u></b> 8A, 8B, 8C, 8D</p> <p><b><u>G10 Econ Dev</u></b> 10C</p> <p><b><u>G11 Health &amp; Safety</u></b> 11A</p>	<p>CS, CC, ITD, IHD, ORG</p>	<p>0-5 years</p>
<p><b>7)</b> Determine funding sources for implementation and the long-term maintenance and operations for all phases of the Field of Dreams.</p>	<p><b><u>G1 Small Town Character</u></b> 1F, 1G</p> <p><b><u>G2 Ponderay Identity</u></b> 2A, 2B, 2H, 2I</p> <p><b><u>G5 Transportation</u></b> 5A, 5C</p> <p><b><u>G6 Public Facilities</u></b> 6F</p> <p><b><u>G8 Parks &amp; Open Space</u></b> 8A, 8C</p> <p><b><u>G8 Parks &amp; Open Space</u></b> 8A, 8C</p> <p><b><u>G10 Econ Dev</u></b> 10C</p>	<p>CS, CC, ORG</p>	<p>0-5 years</p>

<b>8)</b> Work with property owners, conservation partners, and relevant agencies to solidify a vision and implementation plan for the preservation and recreational enhancement of Sand Creek.	<u><b>G2 Ponderay Identity</b></u> 2A, 2B, 2D, 2H, 2I  <u><b>G4 Transportation</b></u> 4F  <u><b>G6 Public Facilities</b></u> 6A  <u><b>G7 Natural Resources</b></u> 7A, 7E, 7F  <u><b>G8 Parks &amp; Open Space</b></u> 8A, 8C, 8D  <u><b>G10 Econ Dev</b></u> 10C  <u><b>G11 Health &amp; Safety</b></u> 11A	CS, PZ, CC, ORG	0-5 years
<b>9)</b> Review, update, and maintain development regulations in accordance with adopted goals and policies concurrent with serviceability.	<i>all</i>	CS, PZ, CC	0-5 Years, ongoing
<b>10)</b> Create and adopt a Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails (PROST) Master Plan	<u><b>G8 Parks &amp; Open Space</b></u> 8A-E	CS, PZ, CC, ORG	5-10 years
<b>11)</b> Form a working group to consider siting a public school in proximity to residential development and to maximize community benefit.	<u><b>G5 Public Facilities</b></u> 5A-C	CS, PZ, CC, ORG	5-10 years
<b>12)</b> Create and adopt a branded Wayfinding Plan	<u><b>G2 Ponderay Identity</b></u> 2A, 2B, 2I	CS, PZ, CC, ORG	5-10 years
<b>13)</b> Negotiate with responsible parties to create identified priority connections within existing neighborhoods.	<u><b>G4 Transportation</b></u> 4B, 4C, 4D, 4F	CS, PZ, CC, ORG	ongoing
<b>14)</b> Pursue grant funding, such as Safe Routes to School, Transportation Alternatives, Child Pedestrian Safety and Federal Lands Access Programs for bicycling and walking improvements.	<u><b>G2 Ponderay Identity</b></u> 2B, 2H, 2I  <u><b>G4 Transportation</b></u> 4A, 4F  <u><b>G5 Public Facilities</b></u> 5B	CS, CC, ITD, IHD, CTY, ORG	ongoing