

Fremont County



Economic Development Strategy

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Fremont County Community Economic Profile	
Public Facilities and Utilities (chapter from Fremont County Comprehensive Plan)	
Values & Visions Workshops	
Community Potential Workshops	
Taking Action for Economic Development Workshops	
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Approach to Community Economic Development

Fremont County engaged the services of Dr. Richard Gardner of Bootstrap Solutions to assist in developing this strategy. Dr. Gardner's experience with the collaborative approach of the Idaho Rural Partnership, and his belief that effective community development must be locally driven help shape the tone of this report. Here is the statement of core values that Gardner presented to Fremont County Commission in the original proposal:

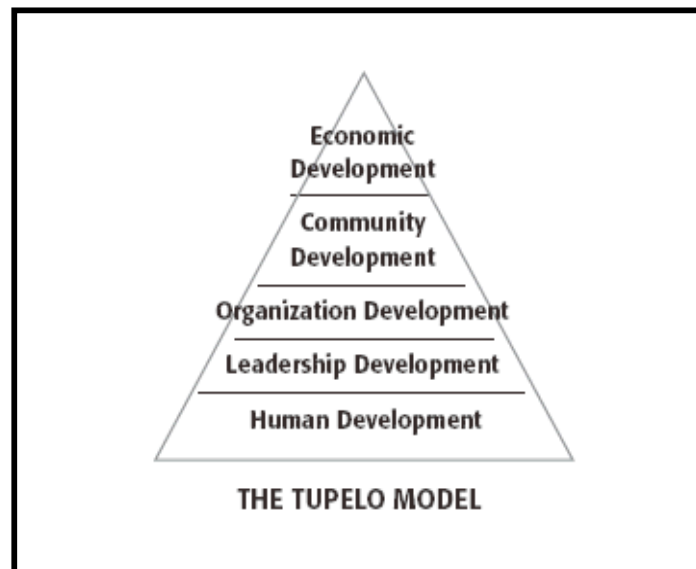
Consultant Core Values

- "I believe each community faces unique circumstances of people, partners, economics, history, resources, and opportunity. Communities are constantly changing, and I strive to meet the community where it is today.
- I believe in community-driven plans and projects. My roles are to guide the process, help compile facts, share my experience of what has worked elsewhere, and above all, to listen.
- I believe that community issues are complicated, with more than one valid perspective. I believe that it is worth taking the time to involve more people in decision making and public understanding. Ordinary people have perspectives worth hearing and experience that may contribute toward solutions. I believe collaborative solutions will pass the test of time better than those imposed by authority or expertise.
- I believe in building on a community's strengths, and in working with, not against, market forces.
- I believe that the conversation, mutual understanding, and consensus gained in a planning process are at least as important as the document itself. I also believe that expressions of vision, goals, and action strategies have more value than detailed action steps for out years. The appropriate next steps will change over time in a dynamic world. Too detailed a plan ignores the ability of competent managers to react to changes, while long term goals and strategies endure."

The Fremont County Economic Development Strategy has its roots in the Tupelo model of community development. It is the story of how a young publisher of a daily newspaper began a course of community change in 1940 that transformed one of the poorest counties in Mississippi into one of the wealthiest.

Guiding Principles of Tupelo Model

- Local people must address local problems.
- Community development begins with a bold and clear-eyed examination of the community and the economy.
- Each person should be treated as a resource, so the community development process begins with the development of people.
- The goal of community development is to help people help themselves.
- Meet the needs of the whole community by starting with its poorest residents, involving them as partners and not simple targets of assistance.
- Leadership is a prime ingredient, but community development cannot be achieved without organizations and structure. Nothing is possible without individuals; nothing is lasting without institutions.
- Community development must be done both locally and regionally if full benefits are to be achieved.
- Keep the community development process in the hands of organizations that involve the people.
- Expenditures for community development are an investment – not a subsidy – and will return gains to the investors. So people have both the responsibility and an interest in investing in the development of their community.
- Technology and global forces need not harm vulnerable communities; they can also be exploited on the community's behalf.
- Community developers need early, visible success.

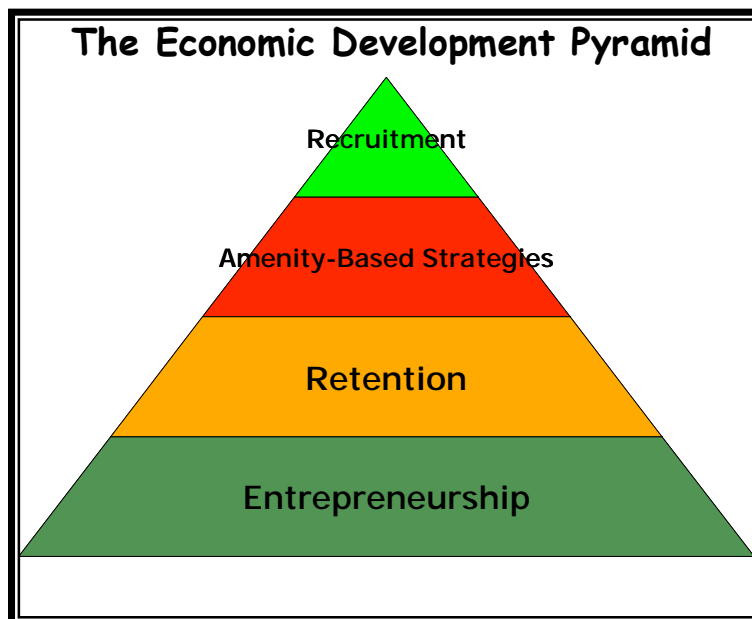


The figure above shows how grassroots community economic development builds upon the education, skills, and interests of the people and upon the natural resources of the land. By educating community leaders about the local community, the economy, and

the possibilities other communities have tried, and by sharpening their group leadership skills, local action is encouraged. It takes healthy and functional community organizations to organize community betterment projects. Community development involves investments in the support systems that underlie the community. This means both public and private infrastructure systems, but also education, health care, housing, and other services for the community's people.

While work can occur on any or all layers of the community pyramid at a given time, the pyramid tries to communicate that efforts at a higher layer may fail if there is not sufficient capacity at the underlying levels. For instance, efforts at economic development may fail if there is not enough attention paid to developing the workforce skills of the people or to investing in the infrastructure needed for business and residents. Or efforts to build healthy and vital community organizations may fail if there is not a good base of trained community leaders.

Economic development is at the top of the pyramid. Brain Dabson of the Rural Policy Research Institute (RUPRI) envisions the economic development pyramid much like the figure below. Gardner has added the Amenity-Based Strategies to make it fit the Intermountain West.



The opportunities are numerous for local entrepreneurs to understand the local conditions of land, economy, and community and act on that knowledge to create new businesses. With a deliberate and networked system of support, both start-ups and existing businesses can tap larger markets with their innovations. Many communities in the Intermountain West have the kind of natural amenities and small town life that attract visitors, part-year residents, retirees, and the economically mobile. Actions that

take advantage of community attractiveness to bring individuals and families to the community are called Amenity-Based Strategies.

At the tip of the pyramid that is itself the tip of the Tupelo pyramid is Business Recruitment. This plan is in no way opposed to business recruitment. Fremont County should remain vigilant for those opportunities. However, this approach recognizes that those opportunities to recruit new businesses into the area are relatively few, compared to the opportunities to grow new and existing enterprises locally. Note how this figure reflects the findings of Porter that of the 7-8 per cent of new jobs that turn over in the national economy each year, 55% come from existing businesses, 44% from new businesses, and only one percent from business recruitment.

Fremont County has an existing business park, and may occasionally find tenants. The new presence of BYU-Idaho may lead to relocations to this area. Businesses that take advantage of natural resource may find it rational to locate here. However, the reality is that many manufacturing businesses prefer to locate closer to their markets. Fremont County's location distant from major markets severely limits its potential for business recruitment, especially given the current tight labor market.

Plan Development Process

The process of developing this strategy also followed the Tupelo model principles. Early meetings were held with Fremont County Commissioners and members of FEAC, the Fremont Economic Action Commission. Interviews with a number of community leaders and agency stakeholders followed. The notes were summarized into themes for the County Commission.

A series of 22 workshops was designed to bring information to the people of Fremont County and to allow folks to reason together about their community and the kinds of actions that would be likely to move Fremont County forward. First, existing data on Fremont County was analyzed and presented to the communities of Island Park, Ashton, and St Anthony. This was written into a publication called a *Community Economic Profile of Fremont County*, which was circulated to attendees and other community leaders. A short set of Socio-Economic Realities was condensed from the *Profile* and presented at subsequent workshops as a reminder and grounding tool.

Next, a tool called the *Community Potential Matrix* was used to educate people about 21 different ways to add jobs into a community and to rank Fremont County communities according to intrinsic potential. Again, this was offered in the three largest communities of Fremont County, and the rankings were compiled and distributed to all. The rankings formed the basis for goal-setting.

Third, a series of Values and Visions workshops hosted discussions about the values held dear by the residents of Fremont County and separate visions for the communities of Island Park, Ashton, and St Anthony.

Three planning meetings were then held with the Fremont Economic Action Commission (FEAC) and an expanded set of stakeholders recruited by FEAC. At these meetings the workshop results were used to review vision and value statements, to draft goals and objectives for the plan that reflected community potential, and to assess the status of infrastructure systems and potential barriers to development.

During the summer of 2007, additional meetings were held with part-year residents in Island Park, and with officials in West Yellowstone around joint tourism strategies.

Next, strategies for the Entrepreneurship goal were developed with a series of four workshops following the *Energizing Entrepreneurship* program of the RUPRI Center for Rural Entrepreneurship. Three were *Foundations in Entrepreneurship* workshops designed to educate leaders about entrepreneurs and their role in vitalizing a community. It included several interactive exercises, two of which were used later. The last workshop was a strategic planning session that built on the earlier work.

Luther Snow of Decorah, Iowa was then engaged to hold a series of workshops on asset-based community development. In addition to inspiring participants, these workshops developed a number of action strategies for the economic development goals.

Finally, a workshop on Developing Regional Tourism was held in Island Park on January 10, 2008 with both Fremont County and West Yellowstone tourism stakeholders.

As the following table demonstrates, a total of 280 participants were directly involved in creating this plan. The ideas flowing from the collective creativity and knowledge of these residents are reflected in the action strategies written into this plan.



Luther Snow Workshop in St. Anthony

Fremont County Economic Development Process

Workshop	Community	Date	# of Participants
Economic Profile of Fremont County	Ashton		9
	Island Park		21
	St Anthony		31
Community Potential Matrix Workshops	Ashton	Jan 23, 2007	17
	Island Park	Jan 24, 2007	20
	St Anthony	Jan 25, 2007	15
Values and Visions Workshops	Ashton	Feb 27, 2007	10
	Island Park	Feb 28, 2007	11
	St Anthony	March 1, 2007	16
FEAC ad hoc Planning Comm meetings		March 20, 2007	14
		April 19, 2007	17
		June 12, 2007	9
Part-Year Resident Meeting	Island Park	Aug 15, 2007	6
Meeting w West Yellowstone officials	West Yellowstone	Aug 16, 2007	9
Foundations in Entrepreneurship	Island Park	Sept 10, 2007	8
	Ashton	Sept 11, 2007	4
	St Anthony	Sept 12, 2007	4
Thinking Strategically about Entrepreneurship	St Anthony	Oct. 25, 2007	6
Asset-Based Community Development	Island Park	Sept 25, 2007	8
	Ashton	Sept 26, 2007	10
	St Anthony	Sept 28, 2007	11
Developing Regional Tourism Workshop	Island Park	Jan 10, 2007	24
Total			280

How to Use This Document

This document was developed with the help of dozens of Fremont County residents. The ideas contained within it will not be implemented without the help of dozens more. The report is organized to show the elements of a standard strategic plan. Values and visions come first. They are rooted in the socio-economic realities of Fremont County,

which summarizes a much more complete *Community Economic Profile* contained in the Appendix.

Next come a set of seven goal chapters. Each contains some explanation of why it is a valid direction for the county, and each is followed by a set of action strategies that emerged from the county workshops and are suggested as a plan of action to move the county toward its visions. The goal statement language was developed with the help of the FEAC planning committee, and the goals were largely established by the rankings from the Community Potential Matrix exercise.

The action strategies are shown on a standard template with background resources and partners, and the first few actions to begin implementation. Each action strategy was ranked according to three criteria:

1. **Plausibility** – ranks the strategy according to the degree to which success will solve the problem or move the county forward. Think of it as a single, double, triple, or home run, or as the stakes for which the county is playing. Some strategies are modest baby steps, while others amount to giant strides toward a more vital and prosperous county.
2. **Feasibility** – measures the probability of succeeding in implementing this strategy. Do we have the financial, staff and volunteer, political, and talent resources to get to success? If you multiply plausibility by feasibility, you obtain what statisticians call the expected outcome. Winning the lottery is a high plausibility multiplied by a very low feasibility. Organizing an educational workshop is a low stakes outcome multiplied by a high probability of success.
3. **Community Readiness** – is the third criteria and is intended to qualitatively measure the degree to which the people of Fremont County and the agencies and organizations that represent it are willing to accept this course of action and invest in seeing it done.

The total score is generated by multiplying the three scores by one another. It is intended to serve as a guide for prioritizing which strategies to tackle first.

Please note that there are many action strategies that are ranked a 2 or 3 in community readiness simply because many in the community have not heard of this possibility or have not had the chance to weigh pros and cons. A good community awareness campaign can increase the readiness in many cases, if it resonates with credibility and matches to people conception of the realities of their community.

Readers may take issue with the scores given in this report and such differences of opinion are welcomed. Public discussion may be all that is needed to raise community readiness or feasibility. Discussions around plausibility invite a close inspection of what the benefits of an action will really be. Discussions of feasibility may generate more options for gathering resources. These are the benefits of a collaborative approach, and they begin when people start talking, talking about options, differences, and the public interest.

This document is intended to be a living plan used daily by the county economic development specialist, county planners, elected officials, and other stakeholders in the county. The action strategy template has a drawdown feature so that each implementation step can be changed from *Not Done* to *In-Progress*, *On-going*, or *Completed*. There is room to add more steps as the project moves forward. Moreover, a CD with this template is included with the plan. The hope is that this document will be used to guide the progress of economic development by the county commission, FEAC, and others. New action strategies may be added over time and others marked as done or as a dry hole that was tried, but proved unsuccessful. If there is progress being made on several of these action strategies at any given point in time, then the county will be moving toward a desired future by taking the actions that are within its control.

Appreciation and Thanks

The author would like to thank the following people for their help in contributing to the creation of this plan. First, FEAC agreed to expand its membership for the purposes of plan development. The following people served on the ad hoc planning committee and attended several meetings and workshops in the course of plan development. Their experience, wisdom, and dedication to Fremont County are very much appreciated.

FEAC Ad Hoc Planning Committee

Susan Baker	FEAC Chair	Ashton
Bill Beck	City of St Anthony	St Anthony
Teddy Stronks	City of Ashton	Ashton
Shayne Hansen	City of Newdale	Newdale
Tom Jewell	City of Island Park	Island Park
Dave Rydalch	Citizen	St. Anthony
Garry Parker	Fremont School District	St. Anthony
Bill Boggs	BLM	Idaho Falls
Keith Hobbs	Harriman State Park	Island Park
Ted Hendricks	The Development Company	Rexburg
Steve Smart	High Country RC&D	Rexburg
Glen Pond	Rocky Mountain Power	Ashton
Steve Trafton	Henry's Fork Foundation	Ashton
Matt Lucia	Teton Regional Land Trust	Driggs
Jerry Johnson	St. Anthony Work Camp	St. Anthony
Donna Steinmann	Hotel	Ashton
Peter Young	Realtor	St. Anthony
Joann Williams	Senior citizen	St. Anthony
Brian Buch	USDA-RD	Blackfoot
Bill Shaw	Idaho Transportation Dept.	Rigby

Dee Reynolds	Fall River Rural Electric	Ashton
Ben Garcia	School District 215	St. Anthony
Tamra Cikaitoga	Parks and Recreation	St. Anthony
Adrienne Keller	USFS	Ashton
Kyle Babbitt	Island Park Gem Team	Island Park
Mitch Allen	Three Rivers Ranch	Ashton
Sawndy Withers	Bank of Idaho	St. Anthony
Luke Floyd	Ashton Youth Council	Ashton
George Wieg	Citizen	St. Anthony
Donna Wieg	Citizen	St. Anthony
Kit Kamo	Idaho Dept. of Commerce	Boise
Debbie Kunz	Hamilton Realty	St. Anthony
Steve Pinther	Citizen	Ashton

The Fremont County Commission, composed of Paul Romrell, Skip Hurt, and Don Trupp are also to be thanked for their committed service to the County and for their assistance throughout this process. They provided a steady hand by faithfully attending the project workshops and contributing their ideas, dreams, and knowledge. This project would not have been possible without their support.

Cathy Koon was responsible for marketing the workshops and arranging their logistics. Her work and her passion for community are very much appreciated, as is her wealth of knowledge of the people and history of Fremont County. Susan Baker has been serving Fremont County as FEAC Chair for many years and is to be commended for that work. Jeff Patlovich and Joshua Chase of the Planning Department have been important partners, and are appreciated for their professionalism and support. County Clerk Abbie Mace has been a delight to work with on administration of this project, and she participated in numerous workshops as well.

Luther Snow's help in presenting a series of workshops using his asset-based community development approach was very valuable. He touched many in the community with his optimism and simple, but effective method of building on what is working in the county. Lorraine Roach of the Hingston-Roach Group braved the snows of January to present a very effective workshop on tourism in Island Park. Together with the results of her survey of tourism operators, she brought new ideas of how the region could work together to make Fremont county a better destination for visitors.

Finally, this project would not have been possible without the support of USDA-Rural Development and a Rural Business Opportunities Grant. Thanks to Brian Buch in particular, for his guidance during the project.

Socio-economic Realities

1. The **Hispanic community** is growing.
2. **Commuting** out of Fremont County is on the rise.
3. **Traditional resource industries** are probably not engines of future growth.
4. The **rise in self-employed** underscores the importance of entrepreneurs.
5. **Non-labor income** contributes a growing share of the county economy.
6. Fremont County **incomes** are quite **low**.
7. **Part-year residents** are a large and growing part of northern Fremont County.
8. Changes in retailing and tourist basing in West Yellowstone and Rexburg mean **high retail leakage** out of the county.

Fremont County Values Statement

Fremont County Stands For:

Good Neighbors – Our small communities are like extended families. Our appreciation and concern for others is demonstrated by being and having good neighbors.

Independence – As Americans, we value the freedom our country provides. As Westerners, we value freedom of choice, individuality, and self-sufficiency.

Concerned, Engaged Citizenry – We value active participation in our democracy, and we enjoy transparent government, with easy access to local officials.

Appreciation of Open Spaces and Natural Places – We value the clear air, water, and night sky of Fremont County, as well as the scenic vistas and recreation opportunities the outdoors provide.

Relaxed Pace of Life – We value the peace and quiet, and easy-going style of Fremont County.

Sense of Place – Fremont County delivers a strong sense of place to its residents, containing an appreciation of heritage and a feeling of spiritual sanctuary.

Volunteerism – We value having opportunities to make a difference as a volunteer, on causes about which we feel passionate.

Hometown Pride – Our community pride is evident in our support of community events and our attention to community appearance.

Strong Spiritual Values – We value the spiritual dimension of our lives, no matter how we define God.

This set of values was the combined result of three workshops held in the county in February 2007. The vision statements for the three communities that follow were drafted from input taken at those same workshops.

A Vision of Ashton

We envision Ashton with a vibrant downtown, full of thriving businesses and people meeting friends in shops and on the street. The happiness of its citizens is contagious and is expressed as a fun and friendly place. The neat, clean appearance of Ashton, its quality infrastructure, and the citizen turn-out for Ashton's numerous community events all demonstrate community pride. Its accessible leaders demonstrate transparent government. The town supports and is supported by the viable farms and ranches surrounding our community. Ashton is a partner in creating happy memories for the visitors it welcomes. Ashton is a community where young people will want to live and raise a family, and where our seniors can age with dignity.

Island Park Vision Statement

Island Park is becoming a community where quality natural resource managers sustain the thriving wildlife, aesthetic natural beauty, healthy environment and visitor attractions of the caldera.

Island Park is becoming a viable community of successful businesses and year-round economy, where people can earn a healthy wage and raise their families.

Island Park is becoming a community that extends across the caldera and well beyond the city limits.

Island Park is becoming a full-service community, with a school, health clinic, and quality public facilities.

Island Park is becoming a community which part-year and full-time residents view as their spiritual home and sanctuary.

Island Park is becoming a community.

Island Park is becoming...

St. Anthony Vision Statement

We see a St. Anthony:

- With a healthy downtown business district full of shops for locally crafted arts and restaurants featuring locally-grown foods.
- Where entrepreneurs and local businesses can grow their dreams.
- That provides information, services, and a friendly welcome to those recreating at our St Anthony Sand Dunes, as well as those passing to and from Yellowstone Park.
- Where regular community events and activities are enjoyed by residents and visitors alike.
- With a quality transportation system that makes it easy to get around by foot, bicycle, ATV, automobile, or plane.
- With a demonstrated record of investment in community infrastructure, and which is not afraid to make large public turnkey investments in our future.
- That carefully nurtures the healthy and safe environment that makes our town a special place to live.

Fremont County ED Action Strategies

February 1, 2008

#	Action Strategy Name	Plausibility	Feasibility	Community Readiness	TOTAL
Tourism					
T1	Sand Dunes Business Network	6	6	4	144
T2	Group Tour and Guided Services Network	7	7	3	147
T3	National Geographic Geo-Tourism Initiative	5	9	2	90
T4	Hess Museum	4	5	3	60
T5	Regional Visitor Fishing Licenses & Snowmobiling Permits	2	4	1	8
T6	Increase Public Access on Lower Henry's Fork	3	5	3	45
T7	Increase Wildlife Viewing Opportunities	4	5	3	60
T8	Enhance Tourism Websites	6	6	3	108
ED Entrepreneurship Development					
ED1	Business Facilitation Program	6	7	3	126
ED2	Business Retention & Expansion Program	7	9	3	189
ED3	Business Mentoring Program	6	7	2	84
ED4	Nurturing Business Networks	8	9	2	144
ED5	Nurture An Entrepreneurial Climate	4	9	3	108
ED6	Youth Entrepreneurship Program	5	5	2	50
AIM Amenity In-Migrants (Retirees & Lone Eagles)					
AIM1	Fremont Ambassadors	5	8	2	80
AIM2	Explore Senior RV Park	5	5	3	75
AIM3	Guerilla Marketing Campaign Targeting Retirees	6	5	2	60
AG Value-Added Agriculture					
AG1	Organic Potatoes and/or Barley	4	8	3	96
AG2	Country Natural Beef Cooperative	2	9	2	36
AG3	Farmers' Market	4	7	3	84
AG4	Alternative Energy Enterprises	4	5	2	40
AG5	Farm & Ranch Recreation Enterprises	2	7	3	42
AG6	Feasibility of Community Kitchen Incubator	5	4	1	20
CI Community Improvements					
CI1	Develop an Active Main Street Program	7	5	3	105
CI2	Community Review for St Anthony	4	8	3	96
CI3	Affordable Housing Development	5	5	3	75
CI4	Adaptive Re-use of Historic Buildings	5	4	3	60
CI5	Community Store	4	3	3	36

OC	Organizational Capacity				
OC1	St. Anthony Hydropower Turbine	5	6	4	120
OC2	County Manage St Anthony Sand Dunes	8	7	4	224
OC3	Community Endowment	7	6	2	84
OC4	RV Park at St Anthony Golf Course	5	8	3	120
OC5	Resort Tax	6	7	3	126
OC6	Leadership Training	7	7	2	98
OC7	Expand & Re-structure FEAC	4	8	2	64
OC8	Increased Accountability	5	9	3	135
VCA	Volunteers & Community Attitude				
VCA1	FEAC & County ED as Model of Volunteerism	4	8	2	64
VCA2	County Volunteer Week	4	6	2	48
VCA3	Fremont County "Paint The Town" Event	3	7	3	63

Tourism

Goal Rationale and Background:

Tourism is Idaho's fifth largest employer, accounting for 47,203 jobs, or 7% of all jobs, directly in 2004. The industry accounts for \$2.1 billion in gross state product, and with indirect and induced impacts accounts for 5% of gross state product and 11% of all jobs, according to a study by Global Insight funded by the Idaho Division of Tourism.

Fremont County has an enormous stream of visitors traveling through it on their way to Yellowstone National Park, nearly 2.3 million vehicles on Highway 20 north of Ashton in 2007. It has numerous world-class attractions within its borders. Yet its share of tourism employment, at 6% direct and 9% total is less than the state averages. Clearly there is potential for growth in this industry.

The Figure T-1 below shows that tourism activity, as measured by lodging sales, has been growing slowly but steadily over time. However, much of this growth is due to inflation in lodging rates. The same Global Insight study estimated a total of \$14.2 million in visitor spending in Fremont County in 2004. Of that total \$6.91 million was spent on lodging (higher than that reported in lodging sales for tax purposes), \$4.31 million on shopping, \$1.87 million on food, about a million dollars on entertainment, and \$150,000 on transportation within the county. Visitor spending nearly doubled in five years from \$7.13 in 2000 to \$14.2 million in 2004, despite a slight fall-off in the wake of 9/11.

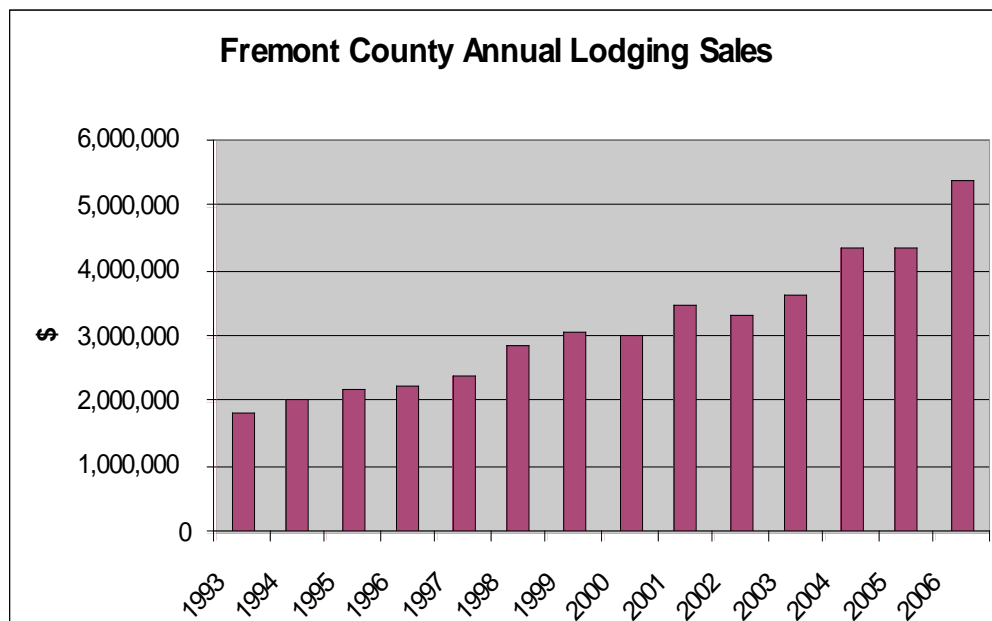


Figure T-1

Figure T-2 shows lodging sales expressed as a % of annual for each month of the year. It reveals a strong pattern of seasonality with a peak season from June through

October. This is a similar pattern to the seasonality of traffic counts, shown here for 2005 on Highway 20, and the Highway 47 scenic route, though the lodging pattern extends a bit deeper into fall.

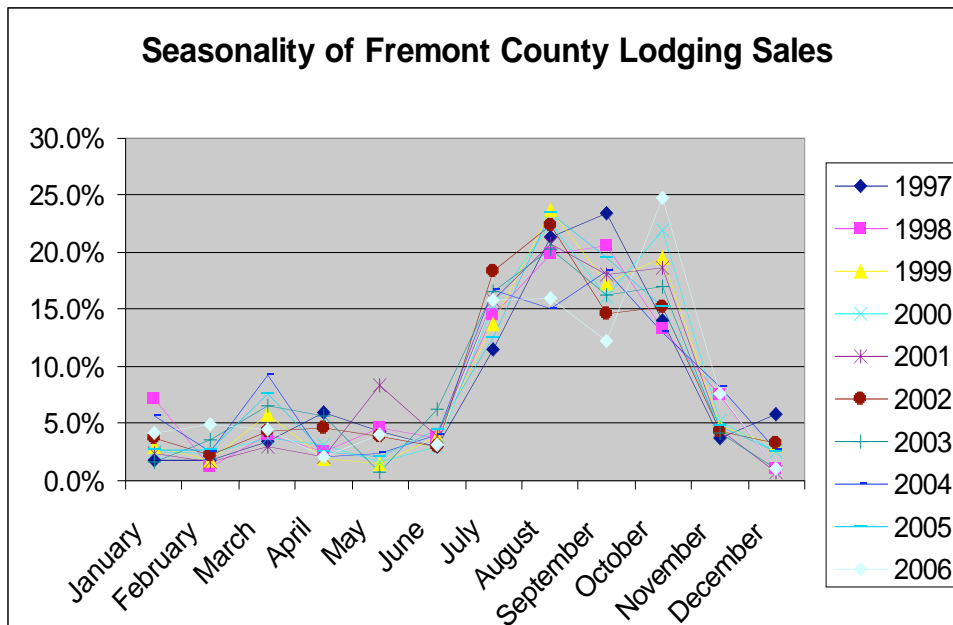


Figure T-2

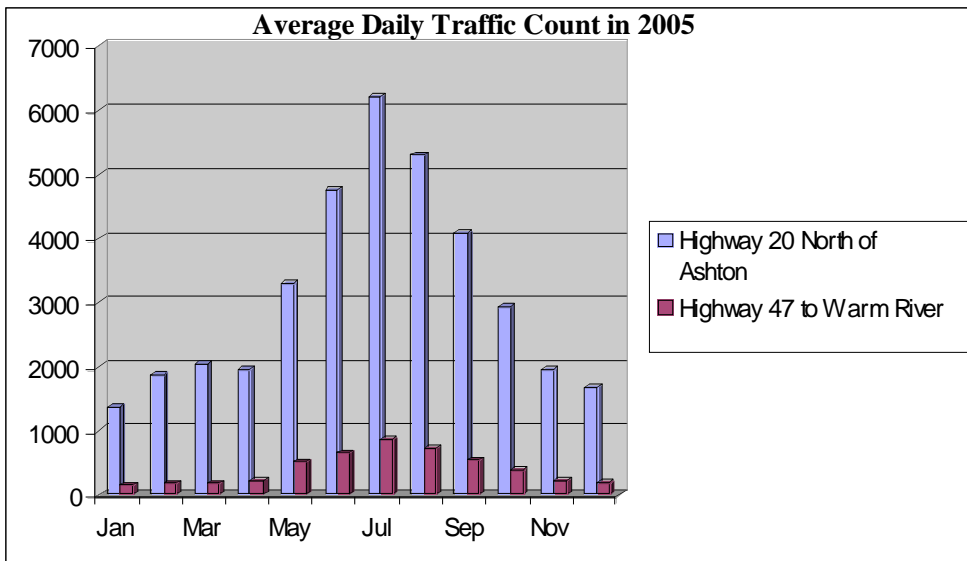


Figure T-3

The Yellowstone Business Partnership report “Turning On the Off-Season” examined the ratio between summer peak and winter employment in the counties surrounding the

park. In 2005/6 Fremont County employment was 16.3% higher at its summer peak. The good news is that the seasonal fluctuation has dropped from 26.4% in 1990/1.

Fishing Impacts. Fishing represents a major recreational activity in Fremont County. The Henry’s Fork of the Snake River is a world-renowned trout fishing resource. A study by Loomis estimated a total of 178,000 visitor-days fishing or boating on the Henry’s Fork (including Henry’s lake) from May through September in 2004. About seven-eighths, or 87.2%, of the visitor days were for fishing versus boating. Numbers from a 2003 Idaho Fish & Game survey yield an even higher 255,000 angler days in 2003.

That study found visitors spent an average of \$304 per trip. Total spending on Fremont County fishing destinations was estimated at \$50.8 million, but as much as 40% of that amount was spent out of the county on airfare, fishing equipment, and groceries. The Loomis study estimated \$29 million in spending in the six-county Eastern Idaho region from visits to the Henry’s Fork. It found that an additional 1000 anglers on the Henry’s Fork would create 5.4 additional jobs. Note that both of these estimates are considerably higher than the \$14.2 million in total visitor spending estimated by Global Insight.

Note that the majority of these days were likely spent in the northern part of the county on Henry’s Lake and the Henry’s Fork. However, in 2007, the state record brown trout was caught in Ashton Reservoir, and many believe there is potential for expanded fishing in the southern reaches of the Henry’s Fork below the caldera.

Fishing Access. In addition to federal and state managed sites, Fremont County maintains fishing access at the following locations:

- ⇒ Henry’s Lake
 - Frome Park, west side of Henry’s Lake

- ⇒ Island Park Reservoir
 - West End
 - Island Park
 - McCrea’s Bridge
 - Buttermilk
 - Mill Creek

- ⇒ Henry’s Fork of the Snake River
 - Upper Last Chance
 - Stone Bridge (near Warm River)
 - Fremont County Boat Docks (north of Ashton)
 - Ora Bridge Access (west of Ashton)
 - Vernon Bridge Access (farther west of Ashton)
 - Fun Farm Bridge
 - Salem Bridge



Tourism and Recreation Assets

Action strategies can be divided into three categories:

1. **Product** – Strategies that improve the quality and number of tourism products in the county.
2. **Promotion** – Strategies that help get word about the tourism products out to more people, or targeted market segments, in new ways.
3. **Partnership** – Strategies that form new working relationships to improve product with better access or more convenience or to conduct more effective promotional activities.

The following list of tourism assets describes the products that Fremont County tourism businesses have to work with.

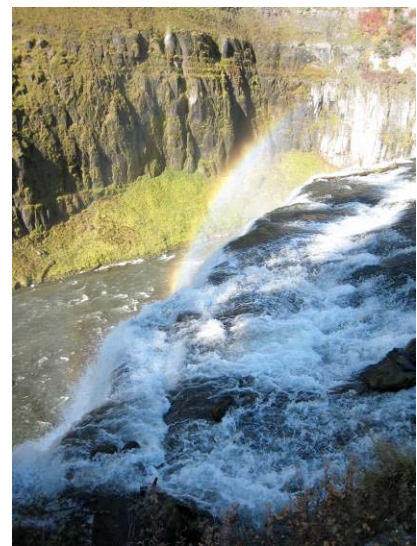
⇒ **Yellowstone National Park.** Fremont County is the only county in Idaho to contain a portion of a national park. A total of 1,197,000 visitors entered the park at West Yellowstone in 2006 with a May-October peak season out of total park visitation of 2.8 million people. 2007 saw an 8.8% increase in visits.

- **Cave Falls** – This entrance to the park is technically within Wyoming, but can only be accessed via Idaho. Not only is Cave Falls a destination in itself, but there are wonderful day hikes and a trailhead for longer backpacking and horse packing trips up the Bechler river into the park.



⇒ **State Parks**

- **Harriman State Park** The Harriman family donated the 15,000 Railroad Ranch to the State of Idaho in 1977. The park contains the 11,000 acre Harriman Wildlife refuge which offers safe haven to moose, elk, deer, bear, and abundant waterfowl including trumpeter swans. The Henry’s Fork winds eight miles through the park and offers excellent fly fishing. Twenty miles of trails are available to hikers, mountain bikers, and equestrians and they are groomed for Nordic skiing in the winter. In addition, the historic ranch buildings offer lodging for small and large group gatherings, along with two yurts. Guided horseback tours and chuck wagon dinners are also available.
- **Henry’s Lake State Park** – This 685 acre park has a campground with 45 sites. The real attraction is the lake and the wonderful views overlooking it.
- **Mesa Falls Recreation Area** – This area is owned by the Targhee National Forest and managed by Idaho Parks & Recreation. Upper Mesa Falls may be the most scenic



waterfall in the State of Idaho, access by paved and railed, handicapped-accessible walkways. An estimated 110,000 people visited Mesa Falls in 2006. Grandview Campground is available as well.

- ⇒ **Big Springs/Johnny Sack Cabin** – This attraction is part natural, part historic. One of the largest freshwater springs in the world form the dramatic beginning of the Henry's Fork of the Snake river as they flow from the base of the Yellowstone caldera. The crystal-clear waters are remarkable and hold trophy trout that can be fed from a bridge. About 12,000 people visited the Johnny Sack Cabin in 2006, but several times that many visit Big Springs every year.



- ⇒ **Targhee National Forest** – There are 525,866 acres of Forest Service land within Fremont County, not to mention 141,969 acres of BLM land. These public lands provide recreational opportunities of all kinds. An estimated 33,600 campers used the Forest Service campground in 2006.
- ⇒ **Scenic Byways** – Maps and interpretive signs mark the way for each of the scenic drives.
- **Mesa Falls Scenic Byway** – Ashton to Island park via State Highway 47
 - **Fort Henry Historic Byway** – County roads from Salem Bridge via Red Road and Yale-Kilgore Road to Island park
 - **Lost Gold Trail Loop** – County roads off the Ft. Henry byway
 - **Teton Scenic Byway** – from Ashton to Teton via State Highway 32
- ⇒ **St Anthony Sand Dunes Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA)** – This is a 46,000 acre area, managed by the Bureau of Land Management, that contains five active sand dune complexes. These dunes are made of white quartz sand that range from 50-over 400 feet in height. The largest dune complex is also part of a 21,000 Wilderness Study Area. Much of the area is closed in winter for the largest wintering desert elk herd in North America. During the summer season, the sand dunes have become one of the most popular motorized recreation areas in the United States. Visits have increased at an annual rate of seven percent for the last decade to an estimated 356,000 visits in 2005. The BLM campground at Egin lake offers 48 sites and operates near full capacity. In addition, there are two private resorts—Sand Hills Resort offers 109 campsites, while the Desert Oasis Resort offers 250 RV sites and 150 campsites, with a variety of amenities.
- ⇒ **ATV and Snowmobile Trails** – Fremont County offers over 500 miles of groomed snowmobile trails each winter. More snow machines are registered for Fremont County than any other county in Idaho. While some of the trails east of

Highway 20 are closed in the summer due to grizzly bear habitat, there remain numerous ATV trails within the public lands of Fremont County

- ⇒ **Hess Museum** – The Hess Family’s remarkable collection of farm equipment, buildings, and Americana was recently donated to Fremont County. Work is underway to find a permanent home for the collection and to make it more accessible to the public.

⇒ **Events**

- **Island Park Winter Fest** – mid-January
- **Ol’ Ladies Classic Snowmobile Race** – January in Island Park
- **American Dog Derby** – Begun in 1917, this is America’s oldest sled dog race in the lower 48 states. www.americandogderby.org
- **Fisherman’s Breakfast** – This annual event marks the opening day of trout fishing in St Anthony.
- **Sand Fest** – June 2007 marked the first year of this new St Anthony event. Nearly 250 ATV participated in a parade through town and other activities.
- **Ft Henry Buckskinners Mountain Man Rendezvous** – June
- **Fourth of July Celebration** – Ashton
- **St. Anthony Pioneer Days** – weekend closet to July 24, draws over 10,000 for parade, musical production, rodeo, etc.
- **Mesa Falls Marathon** – Participation topped 500 in 2007 on this August race from Mesa Falls into Ashton.
- **St. Anthony Summerfest** – Third Thursday in August, 5-9 PM street fair



Fishing the Henry’s Fork at Harriman

Off-Season Activities. Figure T-4 below is taken from a study of 1,693 visitors to the Yellowstone-Teton area in fall/winter/spring. It demonstrates the potential of increasing visits with a variety of guided activities, trails, and museums.

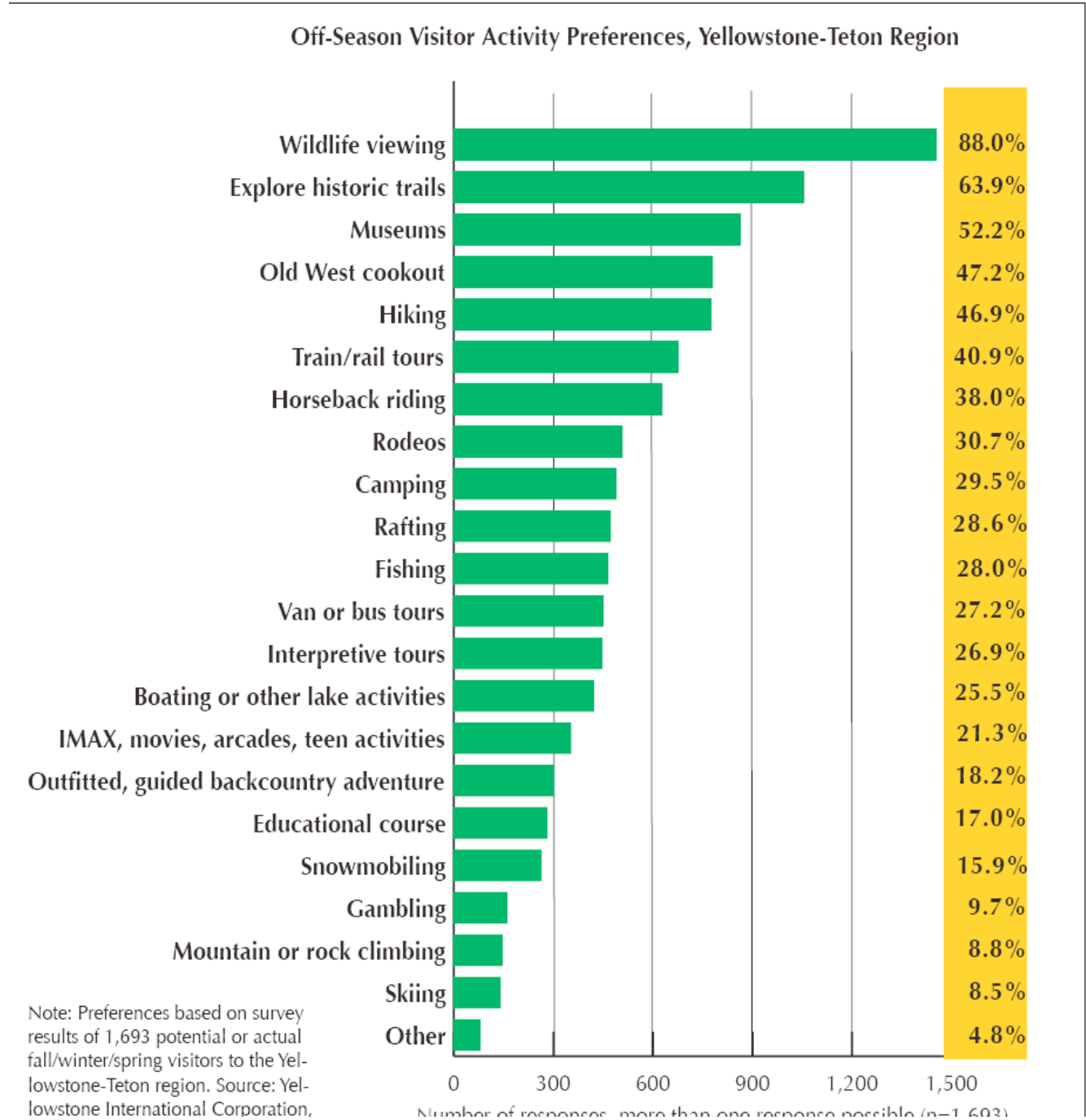


Figure T-4 Source: "Turning On the Off-Season," Yellowstone Business Partnership

Summary. Fremont County has a rich year-round asset base for tourism and recreation, coupled with a stream of nearly 2.3 million vehicles traveling through the county on Highway 20. The county has high leakage in visitor spending both south to Rexburg and north to West Yellowstone, yet visitor spending has been growing steadily. Historically, the Island Park area provides one of the weekend playgrounds for residents of Idaho Falls, in the manner that McCall serves Boise, but these local visitors are blended with a strong contingent from neighboring states and a large international visitor stream making the grand tour of Western national parks. Recent restrictions on winter use of Yellowstone National Park create new opportunity within the caldera. All these factors sum to major potential to add value to the visitor experience and to capture more visitor spending within Fremont County.

References:

Fremont County Economic Development, "Fremont County Community Profile 2007-8"

Global Insight, "The Economic Impact of Travel and Tourism in Idaho," September 2005, <http://tourism.idaho.gov/Portals/16/Documents/pdfs/InsightStudy.pdf>

Loomis, John, "The Economic Value of Recreational Fishing & Boating to Visitors and Communities Along the Upper Snake River", Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics, Colorado State University, May 2005

Yellowstone Business Partnership, "Turning On the Off-Season," April 2007, Bozeman, MT, www.yellowstonebusiness.org

Tourism – To market a growing array of attractions and activities for visitors year-round.

1. To coordinate visitor information county-wide
2. To increase the linkage between the St. Anthony Sand Dunes and the community of St. Anthony, in order to capture an increasing amount of visitor spending within the county.
3. To increase the capacity of Fremont County to house visitors.
4. To expand and promote the various land and water trail systems of Fremont County

T1 Sand Dunes Business Network

T2 Group Tour and Guided Services Network

T3 National Geographic Geo-tourism Initiative

T4 Hess Museum

T5 Regional Visitor Fishing Licenses and/or Snowmobiling Permits

T6 Increase Public Access to the Lower Henry's Fork

T7 Increase Wildlife Viewing Opportunities

T8 Enhance Tourism Web Sites

Other Action Ideas:

- Link with existing efforts – support them
- Create a new team for trail system improvements
- ATV/Snowmobile Trail between Dunes & St. Anthony (all sand), Ashton, Island Park & outlining the community
- Support the provision of additional on-site services at St. Anthony Dunes
- Develop the American Orient Express connections within Ashton
- Remove communication barriers w/Yellowstone National Park & Grand Teton National Park (need local calling to parks like Bozeman has to YNP) & 800#
- Encourage resort investors to look at improving existing/old motels and outdated resorts.
- Central web site @ regulations/registration information. Rec. vehicles or all types – boats, ATV, snow machines
- Finish Rails to Trails – Ashton to Tetonia (landowner problem resolved. This is a great resource with more potential than being realized. Could be part of Great Western Trail Canada-Mexico)
- Build on Existing Events – Summer fest, Fisherman's Breakfast, Mesa Marathon, Dog Derby
- Encourage construction of a Visitors Center at State line going into West Yellowstone
- Survey needs of people in Yellowstone as tourists.
- Create virtual tours of Fremont County attractions, e.g. motel TV channel
- Create kiosks screens to show local attractions
- Convene county motorized recreation working group to address issues.

Action Strategy

Goal: T = Tourism	
Strategy T1 Sand Dunes Business Network	
<p>Background/Concept: The St Anthony Sand Dunes are a recreational asset that grew slowly, then rapidly, in use while many residents were relatively unaware of the magnitude of the activity. Because a significant access road led directly to Rexburg, many users have oriented themselves to Rexburg and no made use of Fremont County merchants for their purchases.</p> <p>The bridge replacement in the summer of 2007 caused the St Anthony Chamber of Commerce to see the opportunity to redirect not only traffic, but purchasing patterns toward St Anthony. A sand dunes festival and ATV parade were organized in June 2007, and a temporary trial established connecting the town and the dunes. By working with the network of service providers to the ATV dune users, both at the dunes and in Parker and St Anthony, the county can capture a greater proportion of visitor spending. Again, this is a long term process that will build over several years. It requires playing the role of network manager to continue looking for ways to add value to the business network and encourage new business formation. It also requires working with county planning to increase the visitor capacity near the dunes. This strategy is largely a continuation of the good work done in 2007.</p>	
<p>Potential Partners: St Anthony Chamber of Commerce Fremont County Planning, city of St. Anthony, and City of Parker dunes business operators</p>	
<p>Potential Resources: Idaho Parks & Rec can help to get RV dump stations built. Sites that can connect with central sewage treatment systems are preferred. BLM</p>	
Concerns:	
Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem?</i> i.e. size of community reward) Score 1-10	6
Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed?</i> i.e. probability of success) Score 1-10	6
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	4
Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	144
Action Steps	
a. Continue to manage the network of dunes-related businesses via e-mail updates and meetings. Look for new opportunities to add value to dune users and help keep visitor spending within the county.	On-going
b. Develop marketing brochures that show dunes users the services available and the contact info for service providers	X = Done

c. Work to develop a permanent ATV/snowmobile trail between the sand dunes and St Anthony. Create a "Park & drive lot on outskirts of St Anthony where ATVers can park and get into town via walking trail, bicycle, or rental car?"	Not Done
d. Continue to work to improve signage to the dunes and to service providers from the dunes.	Not Done
e.	Not Done
f.	Not Done
g.	Not Done

Action Strategy

Goal: T = Tourism
Strategy T2 Group Tour & Guided Services Network
<p>Background/Concept: Fremont County "sells itself," if you experience it. There are so many outdoor recreation opportunities available to the visitor to Fremont County, but because they are so dispersed and because many of the best places are off the beaten path, many travelers, especially families going to Yellowstone Park, may miss the chance to round out their vacation with some special times. Fremont County has a well-established guided fishing industry, but there are many more guided tours in operation, and even more than could exist throughout the year. These specialized tours match the trend toward "geotourism" where people want to understand the land and culture they are visiting and have a distinctive visit with quality experiences in a sustainable manner.</p> <p>What is needed is an organized network of existing tour operators, together with those entrepreneurs who see an opportunity. The purpose of this network would begin with joint marketing. If visitors could look at a comprehensive menu of the free and guided opportunities in the region (including West Yellowstone), they could better plan a full vacation that included some activities not available in the park. Group tours could all be listed with costs, time commitments, gathering points, etc. Suggested itineraries could even be created for 3, 5, and 7 day visits, for example. Once this information is assembled, then the work turns to joint promotion and getting the information into the hands of visitors.</p> <p>Ultimately, the group may even find they need to create a cooperative, central booking office for taking tour reservations by e-mail and phone. (Ideally, could this be located at a new visitor center on the Idaho/Montana border?) Such a booking service could be organized as a cooperative that charges commissions on bookings to fund operations, with profit going back to members as dividends or being re-invested in the cooperative business. Network members should include fishing guides, boating and rafting services, equestrian rides, chuck wagon dinner rides, wildlife viewing tours, mountain-biking, climbing, motorized sand dunes tours or rides, snowmobile tours, farm tours and so on.</p> <p>As the group becomes more comfortable with one another, it is likely they will see ways to mentor entrepreneurs who wish to develop a new niche, to find other ways to coordinate their activities for the convenience of the user, e.g. timing tours so that a morning tour ends with time for lunch and getting to an afternoon tour, or gathering tours at a resort or restaurant for easy cross-marketing. Tour operators are in the best position to hear honest feedback from visitors about the service of other operators and service providers. The collective intelligence-gathering of this network can feed many other tourism improvement actions. The key is to look at the region through the eyes of the customer.</p> <p>This strategy was developed independently at all three Luther Snow workshops in Island park, Ashton, and St. Anthony. In Island Park it was termed as an opportunity to develop eco-tours, in Ashton it was seen as farm tours, and in St. Anthony it became a "family of tours" to capture the potential synergy of working together. This strategy emerged at the tourism workshop as "Vacation packages/central reservations" and ranked third under promotion strategies. Those</p>

actions are a natural outcome from building a network.	
Potential Partners: All 4 chambers of commerce including West Yellowstone	
Potential Resources: Idaho Outfitter & Guides Association, Grant Symonds, www.ioga.org Idaho Outfitters and Guides Licensing Board, Jake Howard, 327-7380 www.ogib.idaho.gov - Idaho has strict regulations regarding licensing those who guide or outfit people for outdoor recreation. It is intended to ensure a high quality experience for visitors. Ron Larsen, Jim Hobbs, Judy Nuebel, Randy Miller, Paul Romrell, Chan Atchley, Susan Baker have all expressed interest in some form of this idea.	
Concerns: A concern may be about working with Montana businesses. This is a common parochial concern, but the fact is that visitors see this as a single region and information needs to flow to visitors on a regional basis to help facilitate vacation planning. The border is merely a political boundary, and all businesses are allies in working to serve the needs of the enormous stream of visitors to the park and to get them to enjoy the other assets of the region.	
Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem?</i> i.e. size of community reward) Score 1-10	7
Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed?</i> i.e. probability of success) Score 1-10	7
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	3
Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	147
Action Steps	
a. A follow-up tourism meeting has already been scheduled for March 27 2008. This could be the meeting to discuss this idea more fully and to engage the first network members in deciding how to kick it off.	Not Done
b. Create an inventory of potential members from chamber rosters, tourism groups like YTT, and Yellowstone Business Council.	Not Done
c. Build a database of products, prices, hours, and operators	Not Done
d.	Not Done
e.	Not Done
f.	Not Done
g.	Not Done

Action Strategy

Goal: T = Tourism	
Strategy T3 National Geographic Geo-Tourism Initiative	
<p>Background/Concept: National Geographic just finished the first project in its new geo-tourism initiative. It mapped the area including Glacier National Park and Waterton Lakes Provincial Park as the "Crown of the Continent." The map shows all the things to do and see and many of the businesses serving visitors in the area. It is created with a regional working group that connects to the communities. 200,000 copies of the map will be distributed.</p> <p>They have just made arrangements with the States of Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming to do a second project around the Yellowstone ecosystem. This project represents a tangible opportunity to use the collected information on group tours and guided activities, plus lodging, dining, and other services to create a more regional image and market in a new way to US and international visitors. It is a way to generate interest in the other sights beyond the park boundaries.</p>	
<p>Potential Partners: States of Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming tourism divisions National Geographic Greater Yellowstone Coalition and/or Yellowstone Business Partnership</p>	
Potential Resources:	
<p>Concerns: Each community will want to work to ensure they are fairly represented by the project.</p>	
Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem?</i> i.e. size of community reward) Score 1-10	5
Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed?</i> i.e. probability of success) Score 1-10	9
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	2
Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	90
Action Steps	
a. Convene tourism group to work with GYC or the local facilitator and get a seat at the table. Put on agenda of March 27 tourism meeting.	Not Done
b. Help get the word out to other Fremont businesses and ensure that all recreation assets are included.	Not Done
c.	Not Done
d.	Not Done
e.	Not Done
f.	Not Done

Action Strategy

Goal: T = Tourism	
Strategy T4 Hess Museum	
<p>Background/Concept: The Hess Museum is a remarkable collection of artifacts, antiques, and buildings that document the history of agriculture in Fremont County. A crossroads has now been reached with the death of the owner, and the desire of the family heirs to make use of the property. They are willing to donate the museum contents if a suitable place can be found to display them. The opportunity is not only to find a way to preserve the collection, but to open it to visitors in a way that reaches more people and becomes a tourism asset. This strategy has additional important as a symbol of the heritage of Fremont County. A solution that preserves the collection and opens it to visitors will increase community pride in its history during a time when many newcomers are coming into the area and need that reminder.</p>	
<p>Potential Partners: Hess family City of Ashton Fremont County</p>	
<p>Potential Resources: Idaho Historical Society Idaho Heritage Trust</p>	
<p>Concerns: Maintain and displaying the collection is a time consuming endeavor and a costly one. Finding a group willing to take this responsibility is important. Active grant writing to ensure the collection gains a top quality interpretation is also important.</p>	
Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem?</i> i.e. size of community reward) Score 1-10	4
Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed?</i> i.e. probability of success) Score 1-10	5
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	3
Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	60
Action Steps	
a. Continue dialogue around options to preserve the Hess collection regarding both place and managing organization.	On-going
b. Conduct funding research to uncover options	* = In Progress
c.	Not Done
d.	Not Done
e.	Not Done
f.	Not Done
g.	Not Done

Action Strategy

Goal: T = Tourism	
Strategy T5 Regional Visitor Fishing Licenses and/or Snowmobiling Permits	
<p>Background/Concept: Visitors to the Island park/West Yellowstone region must face the regulatory burden of a border community. They need different licenses to fish in Idaho and Montana and different permits/tags to snowmobile in the two states. Many of these visitors would gladly pay the full price for the convenience of a single process. A related issue is that the Gallatin and Targhee National Forests require two different permitting processes for guides to take visitors into these public lands. These border issues transcend Fremont County are experienced in the Lolo Pass area, the 4th of July pass area, and near Lake Pend'Oreille as well. This strategy is a long term effort to force some common sense regulatory reform for the sake fostering a better tourism environment. It may require legislation in both states to smooth this wrinkle, but this is a win-win proposition for both.</p> <p>Ideally, a larger organization should take the lead on this issue, such as the Yellowstone Business Partnership or a state outdoor recreation task force, or Idaho Outfitters and Guides Association.</p>	
<p>Potential Partners: Idaho Fish & Game Montana Fish & Game Idaho Parks & Recreation Montana Parks & Recreation Targhee National Forest Gallatin National Forest Yellowstone-Teton Tourism Council</p>	
Potential Resources:	
Concerns:	
Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem?</i> i.e. size of community reward) Score 1-10	2
Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed?</i> i.e. probability of success) Score 1-10	4
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	1
Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	8
Action Steps	
a. Keep raising this issue before regional tourism and recreation groups	On-going
b. Keep on agenda for March 27 meeting to decide if this is an important enough issue to keep moving	Not Done
c.	Not Done

d.	Not Done
e.	Not Done
f.	Not Done
g.	Not Done

Action Strategy

Goal: T = Tourism	
Strategy T6 Increase Public Access to the Lower Henry's Fork	
<p>Background/Concept: The beautiful lower sections of the Henry's Fork are an unheralded resource, lifted up more recently by the green belt public access through St. Anthony. This access could be lengthened, bridged, and enhanced to take advantage of an existing asset for both visitors and residents.</p> <p>A related activity is to get fishing information out to visitors in south Fremont County. Putting a fishing column or spot in the Ashton newsletter or others would help connect fisherman to a place to try their luck in Fremont County.</p>	
Potential Partners: Fremont county planning	
Potential Resources: ID Dept of Parks & Recreation - has funding available from the federal Soil and Water Conservation Fund to acquire and develop new public access points.	
Concerns: Local residents may not be excited about leading more visitors to their favorite fishing stretches.	
Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem? i.e. size of community reward</i>) Score 1-10	3
Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed? i.e. probability of success</i>) Score 1-10	5
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	3
Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	45
Action Steps	
a. Explore stakeholder identification with Tamra C and Dave Rydalch. Abbie Mace, Cole Miller, and Marla Vik might help with this.	Not Done
b. Identify site options for increasing access	Not Done
c. Talk with Id Park & Rec grant manager about fund availability	Not Done
d. Work with Ashton Chamber of Commerce to get a local fishing expert to offer a report in the newsletter. Le-Anne Bolten-Lewis will help	Not Done
e.	Not Done
f.	Not Done
g.	Not Done

Action Strategy

Goal: T = Tourism	
Strategy T7 Increase Wildlife Viewing Opportunities	
<p>Background/Concept: Wildlife viewing was listed as the top activity desired by off-season visitors in a recent survey for Taking Back the Off-Season. It was also the top response in a 1999 survey by the Island Park Gem Team. There are 66 million wildlife watchers (478,000 in Idaho) who spent \$8 billion on travel last year. Adding to the great spots like Big Springs and Harrima State park, will increase the likelihood that visitors will linger on their way in and out of Yellowstone.</p>	
<p>Potential Partners: Idaho Transportation Department will be needed to add pullouts and viewpoint signage on Hwy 20.</p>	
<p>Potential Resources: Tamra C. will have good ideas about this.</p>	
Concerns:	
Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem?</i> i.e. size of community reward) Score 1-10	4
Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed?</i> i.e. probability of success) Score 1-10	5
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	3
Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	60
Action Steps	
a. Brainstorm a list of potential new places for wildlife viewing	Not Done
b. Explore what improvements need to be made to facilitate viewing, including signage.	Not Done
c. Assess feasibility of each site, based on land ownership, access, cost of improvements, permitting, etc	Not Done
d. Find a champion to work on each site.	Not Done
e. Connect new sites into maps and other promotional materials	Not Done
f.	Not Done
g.	Not Done

Action Strategy

Goal: T = Tourism	
Strategy T8 Enhance Tourism Web Sites	
<p>Background/Concept: The top promotion strategy identified at the tourism workshop was to enhance the area's web sites. In a way, this is related to the top partnership strategy of improving community cooperation. The group felt that forcing all to merge into a single portal web site was not necessary. A more decentralized approach is to link all the sites and to help each tourism business have a web site, connected to the appropriate Chamber of Commerce. The Ashton Chamber uses the Chamber Express template from a company in Atlanta. The group felt that the focus should be on connections between Fremont County and West Yellowstone and then spread from there into south Fremont and north into Ennis and Big Sky. Creating a financial relationship with Google Ad words or paper click does not have to be very expensive and can help bring in bookings.</p>	
<p>Potential Partners: West Yellowstone, Island park, Ashton, and St. Anthony Chambers of Commerce Local internet providers website consultants RC&D and economic development staff BYU student interns to assist in web design and improvements?</p>	
Potential Resources:	
<p>Concerns: The name "Yellowstone" is a hindrance in search engine use, because it is so commonly overused. Affordability of web site design.</p>	
Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem? i.e. size of community reward</i>) Score 1-10	6
Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed? i.e. probability of success</i>) Score 1-10	6
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	3
Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	108
Action Steps	
a. Research information. Who all has websites and who needs them? What are the common links all sites should connect to?	Not Done
b. Host website training for tourism operators to show how to improve, how to purchase Google ad words, key words for search engines, etc	Not Done
c. Match businesses lacking websites with resource people to get it done	Not Done
d. Each member should check current links immediately	Not Done
e. Hold meeting of Chamber presidents and webmasters to discuss next steps toward improving, and possibility of jointly buying ad space on travel planning websites.	Not Done

f.	Not Done
g.	Not Done

Entrepreneurship Development

Goal Rationale: Economic developers are increasingly recognizing entrepreneurs as an important class of change agents within a community and an important foundation, together with existing businesses, for developing a rural economy. To quote John Allen, director of the Western Rural Development Center, in the Spring 2007 *Community Investments* magazine, “These contemporary models of rural economic development... view industrial recruitment as a secondary activity. They view local entrepreneurs as a foundation for developing a viable economy.” Dr. Allen finds entrepreneurship development very consistent with an assets-based approach to community economic development. David Porter’s seminal research found that 7-8% of jobs in the US turn over every year. He found that 55% of the new replacement jobs are created by existing businesses and 44% are created by new businesses.

One of the Socio-Economic Realities discovered in the Community Economic Profile of Fremont County was that self-employment was much higher than Idaho or US averages in Fremont County. Self-employment accounted for 37.5% of jobs in 2005. This is an increase from 28.7% in 1980 and 32% in 1990. Fremont County now ranks 9th in Idaho in terms of self-employment.

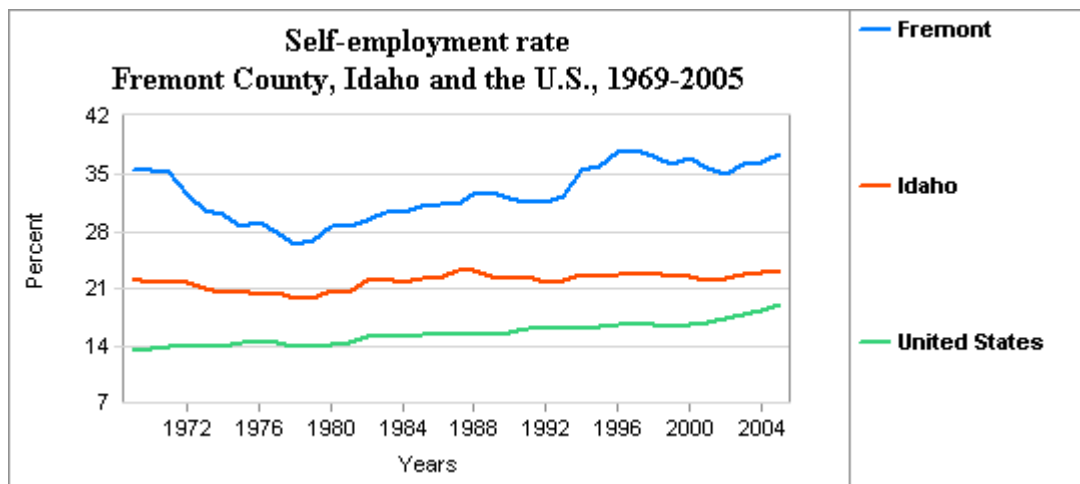


Figure ED1

For these reasons, participants in the Community Potential workshops ranked Entrepreneurial Development as an important focus area, and the FEAC planning group made it Goal B in the economic development strategy.

The entrepreneurship workshops made it clear that entrepreneurs come in many different forms. An entrepreneur may be a new business start-up, and existing business owner who is trying to innovate with a new product, service, or target market, or a government or non-profit manager who is growing through new partnerships. The Entrepreneurial Talent differentiated types further:

- **Aspiring Entrepreneurs** – are people who are researching, dreaming about, or planning a new business. Many are youth; some are retired from one career and starting something new.
- **Start-Ups** – have made the decision to enter a new business, but may be struggling with a business plan, product concept, or other aspect of management.
- **Re-Starts** – are those who have tried and failed in the past, but are using their experience in a new venture.
- **Transitional** – business owners are those who are considering retirement or a move from the community, and need a business transfer plan.
- **Survival or Necessity** – business owners are those who started a business as an alternative to employment in the community, often after losing a job. Their business may be struggling as they seek to remain in the community.
- **Lifestyle** – business owners are not interested in rapid growth, but only in making a comfortable living for themselves and their family. This includes many in the professional community and some Lone Eagles who have moved into Fremont County to enjoy the lifestyle.
- **Growth-Oriented** – entrepreneurs are new or existing business owners who are trying to grow sales, profit, and/or employment by adding a new product or service, or in some other way changing their business.
- **Serial** – entrepreneurs are those who have started and disposed of several businesses in their career. They love the challenge of starting and growing a new enterprise.
- **Entrepreneurial Growth Companies** – are the high-flying growth companies that create much of the new employment. They exist in rural areas, but are rarer than in cities.

Using this typology, participants brainstormed a partial list of entrepreneurs and business owners within the county that seemed to match the E-Talent categories. This list is incomplete and should be expanded with the help of the Chambers of Commerce and other groups. It forms the basis for targeting and starting a visitation program.

ENTREPRENEURIAL TALENT MAPPING – FREMONT COUNTY

Aspiring		Re-Starts	
Melissa Hinkley Aldon Bowles		Betty Stevens Wards (Laundry)	
Start-Ups		Transitional	
Matt Lister Robert Palmer Lucella Smith Caolena Palmer Mocklers Whisper Creek Homes Turnquist Jake Amen Timbers Edge Golf Course		Harry Halkar Linda Bates Bob Fisher Dr. Cheyne Danny Hathaway Gerald Larsen Mike Parker	Hess Museum Gary Bidwell Hersh Lenz Trails Inn/Mary Chriswell Marge Carlson Richard Bishop - trim work/furniture Elk Creek Station Robin's Roost
		Growth Oriented	
		Rexburg Free Clinic Sand Hills Resort Desert Oasis Joe Hess Walter Produce Jeremy Lecheminant Spurs & Spokes Scott Kamachi Deverl Stoddard Mike Lawson Ron Larsen Blair Dance	Doug Clegg –Spring Creek RJ Thueson Crapo Brothers Nicole & Curtis Stoddard Bob Comstock Chan Atchley Hyde Boats Developers Frank Vandersloot Sheila Kellogg – Ashton Nursing Home Lavar Hunter – Parker Septic
Survival		Serial	
Buck's Mutt Rose & Son Wadsworths St. Anthony Truck Repair Linda Bates		Fred Miyasaki Bob Bauer Dare Loomis DeVerl Stoddard Curt Roger	
			Kevin Hathaway Emma Atchley Marla Payne Elizabeth Laden Dick Nelson Cary Campbell
Lifestyle		Entrepreneurial Growth Companies	
Newdale Paint & Body Ty Hansen Aronalee Gould Richard Housley Dean Hathaway Paul Allen C & C Supply Stronks Lumber	Bonnie Burlage Ron Palmer Steve Pinther Mark Seeley Tim Reiland Ralph Moon Jerry Carter Fly tiers & rod bldrs	Fred Miyasaki Tad Sweet	

A similar start was made to mapping the private and public entrepreneurial assets that exist within Fremont County or serve Fremont County. Again, this list is incomplete. Interviews with potential service providers will generate greater clarity about the programs provided and the issues in serving Fremont County entrepreneurs.

Entrepreneurial Assets in Fremont County

Business Services

<p>Accounting Services Atchley Accounting Services – Ashton Searle Hart Assoc, CPAs – Rexburg Allied Financial, CPA, Rexburg</p>	<p>Legal Services Business lawyers in Rexburg & I.F.</p>
<p>Human Resources Many in Idaho Falls ID Dept Labor – IF, workforce dev The Development Company, workforce</p>	<p>Financing Several in Rexburg, I.F.</p>
<p>Business Transfer Planning Several in Rexburg, I.F.</p>	<p>Production Consulting Idaho Tech Help – Pocatello Lean Enterprise program Lean Office program Six Sigma program, quality control Product prototype dev. Customized consulting</p>
<p>Marketing & Market Development ISBDC, Idaho Falls Eastern ID E-Center</p>	<p>Other?</p>

Note: Not all business services are equal. Some services can address basic needs such as financial bookkeeping, while others can handle the complicated issues of business transfer planning. One way to assess the capacity of the service is to look at the kinds of clients it serves. Clients with complicated and sizeable business structures indicate that the business service has higher capacity levels.

Entrepreneurship Programs

<p>Mentor/Peer Group Programs SCORE – Idaho Falls</p>	<p>Awareness & Assessment Programs Idaho Business Solutions web wizards www.idahobizhelp.org</p>
<p>Market Dev. & Marketing Programs ISBDC – Idaho Falls Eastern ID E-Center</p>	<p>Business Plan Development & Feasibility Study Support ISBDC – Idaho Falls SCORE – Idaho Falls The Development Company – Rexburg USDA Value-Added Producer Grants Eastern ID E-Center</p>
<p>Technical Assistance Programs ISBDC – Idaho Falls Eastern ID E-Center TechLink – Bozeman Tech Connect East – Idaho Falls Upper Snake River Valley Incubator - Rex</p>	<p>Training Programs NxLevel Classes – ISBDC, various places</p>
<p>Specialized Assistance Programs Idaho TechHelp – Pocatello INL Tech Transfer & Commercialization BSU TECenter - Nampa</p>	<p>Other? St. Anthony Business Resource Center</p>

Capital Programs

<p>Financial Literacy (1)</p>	<p>Micro Lending Program The Development Company - Rexburg</p>
<p>Revolving Loan Programs The Development Company, Rexburg</p>	<p>Commercial Lenders Bank of Idaho- St. A, Ashton, Island Park Wells Fargo – St. Anthony , Rexburg Key Bank – Ashton, St. Anthony , Rex. Bank of Commerce - Rexburg</p>
<p>Linkages to State & Federal Financing Programs Idaho Business Solutions, Resources Wizard, www.idahobizhelp.org USDA-RD business loans - Blackfoot SBA-Boise</p>	<p>Local Angel Investors Eastern ID E-Center? Kickstand?</p>
<p>Seed, Venture, & Equity Investors Wasatch Venture Fund</p>	<p>Other?</p>

Notes: 1) Financial literacy relates to the entrepreneur’s knowledge and experience with various forms of capital and financing arrangements. Strategies to help entrepreneurs become more capital-aware are critically important.

2) Chances are that multiple capital resources exist. Whether private or public, these resources are often complicated to use and challenge the entrepreneur. Creating help within the community to assist the entrepreneur work through red tape of these programs is important to building a capital-rich environment.

The *Energizing Entrepreneurship* program recommends that successful communities have entrepreneurial support systems with these characteristics:

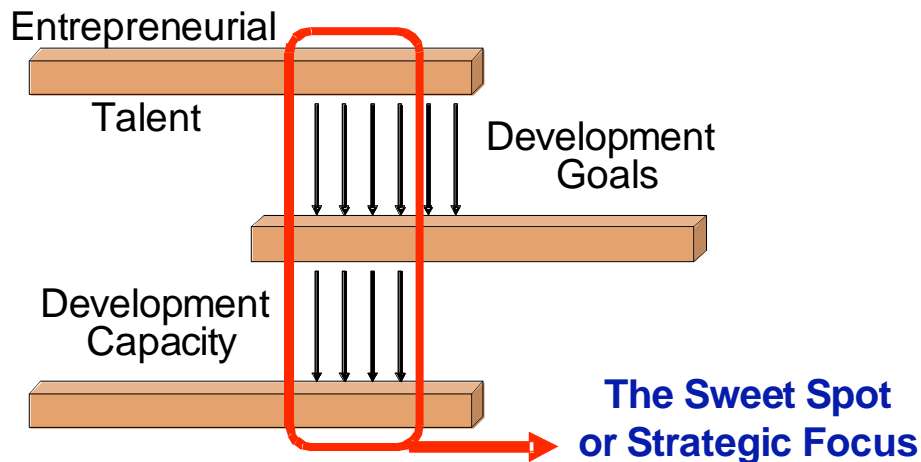
- Focus on entrepreneurs
- Build on assets
- Encourage collaboration & take regional approach
- Engage youth, minorities, aging and others who are not usually invited to the table
- Strategically target entrepreneurs
- **Celebrate** community and entrepreneurial success!!

A community **Entrepreneurial Development System** has the following components:

1. Adult Entrepreneurship Education
2. Youth Entrepreneurship
3. Customized Technical Assistance
4. Capital Access Programs
5. Networking & Mentoring
6. Programs to Create Cultural Change

It is recommended that communities target their efforts and develop action strategies by focusing on the “policy sweet spot,” where available E-talent, economic development goals, and existing program capacity align, as in the figure below.

Finding the Sweet Spot: Aligning E-Talent, Goals, & Capacity



*In Fremont County, economic development goals exist to help tourism, value-added ag enterprises, and existing businesses. The group decided to focus on 1) **Growth-Oriented** businesses, which it defined as existing businesses that are trying to innovate and grow, 2) provide **Start-Ups** with basic business support, and 3) **Transitional businesses**, by trying to keep these valuable existing businesses operating through a*

*time of change in business ownership. The group decided to use a business facilitation approach to work with new and existing businesses, and to focus on the **Networking and Mentoring** and **Cultural Change** components of an Entrepreneurial Development System.*

Entrepreneurship Development – To develop a system of support for all entrepreneurs in Fremont County.

- 1) To develop a community culture that appreciates and supports entrepreneurs
- 2) To work with existing businesses to assist them in their efforts to sustain & expand
- 3) To build bridges between existing business development support programs and Fremont County.
- 4) To develop ways to fill the gaps in an Entrepreneurship Development System in Fremont County.

Action Strategy ED1: Develop a **business facilitation program** with which to approach existing and new businesses.

Action Strategy ED2: Implement a **business retention and expansion program**, using an existing template.

Action Strategy ED3: Develop a pool of willing **business mentors** in different types of businesses, looking first to the pool of serial entrepreneurs, and seek to match start-ups with an experienced mentor for informal, one-on-one consultations.

Action Strategy ED4: Nurture Business Networks – A considerable amount of support, mentoring, and creative new ideas can come from starting and supporting business networks. The ED specialist is not required to be an expert in anything except network management—the art of convening groups of similar business owners or aspiring entrepreneurs, listening for opportunities, and striving to add value to the group’s effort. These networks can be very informal meetings at an individual’s home or business, or they may have a structure. While networks may not organically happen in all these areas, the following are suggested networks for Fremont County. Some may flourish while others struggle to find a purpose and fade from the scene. What is certain is that each network that is established will generate some unforeseen and positive outcomes and opportunities.

- a. **Community Business Networks** – for St. Anthony, Ashton, and Island Park. The Chambers of Commerce may be natural leads for these networks. Bob Comstock expressed interest for Ashton.

- b. **Group Tour Network** – While this strategy will be used under the Tourism goal for purposes of developing a coordinated marketing approach, the creation of the network may very well lead to entrepreneurial activity by existing or new tour managers. Whether a farm tour, cultural tour, eco-tour, or adventure tour, there are many similarities to the business of managing a group activity.
- c. **Dunes Network** – The beginnings of this network have already happened in the 2007 visitor season. Here again, all business operators serving dunes visitors will benefit from having a full complement of services available, and from working cooperatively to inform potential customers.
- d. **Ag Network** – The Value-Added Agriculture goal suggests forming a farmer's market and other direct-marketing efforts. This should lead to a network of vendors and ag innovators who can benefit from opportunities to share their issues and challenges.
- e. **Arts Network** – Again the start of this network may have occurred with the Emporium of the Arts concept in Ashton in recent years. Chan Atchley is interested in helping this group of creative artist businesses.
- f. **Home-Based Business Network** – The contributions and challenges of those working from their homes often goes unnoticed and unappreciated. Forming this network may lead to new Chamber members and an awareness of many new and existing businesses in the County. Lone Eagles may be interested in this network.
- g. **Hispanic-owned businesses** – Latino business owners will have their own set of challenges and their own cultural approach. They tend to rely on family and friends for financing and a peer approach for business advice. Nationally, Hispanics are forming new businesses at a faster than average rate.

Action Strategy ED5: Nurture an entrepreneurial climate

Action Strategy ED6: Explore possibility of youth entrepreneurship program.

Other Action Ideas:

- Establish a new revolving loan fund (St. Anthony can leverage its \$750,000 w/USDA-IRP Program), working with The Development Company when loan demand justifies the action
- Explore ways to create and expand use of microenterprise funds
- Educate business & land owners
- Survey customer (businesses)
- Web presence/marketing w/o advertising course
- Conduct telecommunications assessments and look for ways to support improvements in communication systems (Information Hwy)
- Explore the community-owned department store concept to reduce retail leakage (personal investment)

Action Strategy

Goal: ED = Entrepreneurial Development	
Strategy ED1 Develop a business facilitation program for existing and new businesses	
<p>Background/Concept: The generic principles of business facilitation can be adapted to Fremont County. Here the facilitator need not be a business expert, but instead uses good listening skills to understand the business concept and help the entrepreneur understand themselves enough to know where they need assistance. The facilitator then 1) refers entrepreneurs to the appropriate business development program, 2) helps connect the entrepreneur with local business owners who can serve as mentors, and/or 3) links them with private service providers who can help round out the business's management skill set. The idea is for the facilitator to add value in ways that reduce the risk of failure.</p>	
Potential Partners:	
<p>Potential Resources: Ruth Townsend & Begin program of Baker City, OR of Gil Bates, Ida-Lew for Sirolli enterprise facilitation See E-asset map</p>	
<p>Concerns: The facilitator role requires a soft style of attentive listening, quiet but effective referrals that draw on good knowledge of local assets, and gentle suggestions. Confidentiality about the business are essential to building relationships of trust, and must be maintained by facilitator and advisory board alike. Good recordkeeping will help document results. Patience with this strategy should yield job creation at very reasonable cost per job.</p>	
Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem?</i> i.e. size of community reward) Score 1-10	6
Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed?</i> i.e. probability of success) Score 1-10	7
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	3
Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	126
Action Steps	
Read and research business facilitation methods 1. Read Ripples on the Zambezi by Ernesto Sirolli a. 2. Visit Ruth Townsend, Baker City, former BEGIN manager, about general principles of business facilitation, focusing on methods of engaging business clients, confidentiality, team building, and outcome monitoring	Not Done
b. Visit the Fremont service providers listed in the asset map to better understand the services each can provide and the referral protocols each desires. Inquire how service to Fremont County can be improved.	Not Done
c. Build a business advisory committee who can help brainstorm	Not Done

assistance suggestions and help mentor and advise start-ups	
d. Expand the E-Talent Inventory by brainstorming other entrepreneurs with Chamber leaders and other groups	Not Done
e. Work w Chambers and others to announce offer to meet and listen to entrepreneurs and new business owners talk about their business needs. Stress confidentiality.	Not Done

Action Strategy

Goal: ED = Entrepreneurial Development	
Strategy ED2 Business Retention & Expansion	
<p>Background/Concept: Remember David Porter's research showing that 55% of new jobs come from existing businesses? A BR&E program should be a basic component of every local economic development effort, but it needs to be conducted in an organized fashion. An organized business retention and expansion program consists of using a standard BR&E template (consisting of interview request letter, interview form, thank you follow-up letter, analysis spreadsheet, volunteer training materials, and ideas for celebrations), to interview every existing business that can be found in the county. Typically, the interviews are conducted by pairs of volunteers using a standard form, so that the results of all interviews can be compiled and analyzed. The committee should pursue not only the businesses that are Chamber members or found in the telephone directory, but also all the home-based businesses and non-farm self-employed who can be identified. The objectives of this program are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To engage in a community dialogue with business owners in a way that assures them that they are valued by the community. 2) To identify and appreciate businesses that are hidden quietly within the county. 3) To identify those businesses who would like to expand and the exact nature of their barriers to expansion. 4) To refer those businesses to appropriate business development service providers for help in overcoming obstacles. 5) To identify those barriers that are within local governments' ability to change and to seek to implement those changes, thus demonstrating a supportive business environment. 	
<p>Potential Partners: chambers of commerce BYUJ interns may be willing to help with interviews and compile the analysis/recommendations</p>	
<p>Potential Resources: Idaho Department of Commerce, should have a program template Western Rural Development Center, 435.797.WRDC, wrdc@ext.usu.edu, should have a template Dr. Robert Coppedge, New Mexico State U is a regional authority on BR&E programs U of I Extension Service could be a help in analyzing results or getting a template</p>	
Concerns:	
Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem?</i> i.e. size of community reward) Score 1-10	7
Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed?</i> i.e. probability of success) Score 1-10	9
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	3
Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	189
Action Steps	

a. Find and review BR&E programs through Commerce and WRDC, and select a template	Not Done
b. Work with the chambers of commerce to create volunteer teams in each town. Conduct orientation meetings to acquaint volunteers with the program and its purposes and train on conducting interviews	Not Done
c. Send out request letters, schedule and conduct interviews	Not Done
d. Work with BYU or Extension to collect and analyze results	Not Done
e. Conduct follow-up including referrals to business development partners, implementation of actionable items by local government, and publicly thanking and celebrating county businesses	Not Done

Action Strategy

Goal: ED = Entrepreneurial Development	
Strategy ED3 Business Mentoring Program	
<p>Background/Concept: Some of the best information a start-up entrepreneur can get comes from fellow business owners who have experienced business start-ups themselves. Serial entrepreneurs are people who enjoy the process of launching a new business and have done it several times Professional business counseling is very expensive to deliver to entrepreneurs in remote communities. It is far more efficient to support mentoring networks for business owners to help one another. Serial entrepreneurs are people who enjoy the process of launching a new business and have done it several times. They usually make great mentors. This strategy builds a pool of willing mentors, who can then be matched to start-up or re-start entrepreneurs in order to reduce Fremont County business failures. The brokering of mentor services becomes a value-added service of Fremont County Economic Development. This may become a side effect of ED4 Nurturing Business Networks.</p>	
<p>Potential Partners: local serial entrepreneurs and other successful business owners local banks may help with both locating mentors and making referrals to new clients</p>	
<p>Potential Resources: Kentucky Highlands investment Corp also operates a coaching academy and may be a source of materials. see http://www.energizingentrepreneurs.org for a case study Mary Emery, North Central Rural Dev Center is a former Idahoan with an interest in coaching, (515) 294-8321, memery@iastate.edu</p>	
<p>Concerns: Mentoring will be a new role for most folks. A short training or sharing materials about mentoring will be helpful.</p>	
Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem? i.e. size of community reward</i>) Score 1-10	6
Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed? i.e. probability of success</i>) Score 1-10	7
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	2
Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	84
Action Steps	
a. Complete brainstorming of serial entrepreneurs with chambers and others	Not Done
b. Investigate other coaching/mentoring programs. Use the concepts learned in business facilitation	Not Done
c. Talk with serial entrepreneurs and others who might be willing to serve as mentors. Provide them with training materials on mentoring.	Not Done
d. As the mentor pool develops, let businesses know of the mentoring opportunity, targeting new business start-ups	Not Done
e. Develop an evaluation for both mentors and mentees to fill out after six months or a year	Not Done

Action Strategy

Goal: ED = Entrepreneurial Development
Strategy ED4 Nurturing Business Networks
<p>Background/Concept:</p> <p>A considerable amount of support, mentoring, and creative new ideas can come from starting and supporting business networks. The ED specialist is not required to be an expert in anything except network management—the art of convening groups of similar business owners or aspiring entrepreneurs, listening for opportunities, and striving to add value to the group’s effort. These networks can be very informal meetings at an individual’s home or business, or they may have a structure. While networks may not organically happen in all these areas, the following are suggested networks for Fremont County. Some may flourish while others struggle to find a purpose and fade from the scene. What is certain is that each network that is established will generate some unforeseen and positive outcomes and opportunities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Community Business Networks – for St. Anthony, Ashton, and Island Park. The Chambers of Commerce may be natural leads for these networks. Bob Comstock expressed interest for Ashton. These local networks should be linked to the new Kickstand-Idaho Falls business network being started by TechConnect for networking at a regional level, especially with technology-oriented businesses. b. Group Tour Network – While this strategy will be used under the Tourism goal for purposes of developing a coordinated marketing approach, the creation of the network may very well lead to entrepreneurial activity by existing or new tour managers. Whether a farm tour, cultural tour, eco-tour, or adventure tour, there are many similarities to the business of managing a group activity. c. Dunes Network – The beginnings of this network have already happened in the 2007 visitor season. Here again, all business operators serving dunes visitors will benefit from having a full complement of services available, and from working cooperatively to inform potential customers. d. Ag Network – The Value-Added Agriculture goal suggests forming a farmer’s market and other direct-marketing efforts. This should lead to a network of vendors and ag innovators who can benefit from opportunities to share their issues and challenges. e. Arts Network – Again the start of this network may have occurred with the Emporium of the Arts concept in Ashton in recent years. Chan Atchley is interested in helping this group of creative artist businesses. f. Home-Based Business Network – The contributions and challenges of those working from their homes often goes unnoticed and unappreciated. Forming this network may lead to new Chamber members and an awareness of many new and existing businesses in the County. Lone Eagles may be interested in this network. g. Hispanic-owned businesses – Latino business owners will have their own set of challenges and their own cultural approach. Nationally, Hispanics are forming new businesses at a faster than average rate.
<p>Potential Partners:</p> <p>The Development Company BYUUI interns & Eastern Idaho Entrepreneurial Center Kickstand - Idaho Falls chapter (see Tech Connect in Idaho Falls) Chambers of commerce</p>
<p>Potential Resources:</p> <p>SBDC, the Development Company, Idaho Hispanic Business Association. ID Commission on the</p>

Arts	
Concerns: Operating all these networks will make serious demands on the ED specialist. The networks should be encouraged to be self-organizing within the first few meetings, with the ED program adding value with logistical support, marketing, and connections to resources and partners.	
Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem?</i> i.e. size of community reward) Score 1-10	8
Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed?</i> i.e. probability of success) Score 1-10	8
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	2
Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	128
Action Steps	
a. Assess the interest	Not Done
b. Hold an initial meeting where the group brainstorms common issues, potential joint actions, resources that are of interest, leading to the development of a mission statement for the network and a decision to meet again	Not Done
c. Share the written minutes with the group and with potential partners	Not Done
d. Help with finding locations to meet, meeting design and facilitation, linking to resources, refreshments, etc	Not Done
e.	Not Done

Action Strategy

Goal: ED = Entrepreneurial Development	
Strategy ED5 Nurture an Entrepreneurial Climate	
<p>Background/Concept: One low-cost, but not simple, positive change that can be made is to seek ways to be supportive of entrepreneurs and change the culture and attitude toward entrepreneurs in the county. Too often they are given lip service, but people who fail are ridiculed privately. Leaders can use their position in the community to communicate a desire for entrepreneurs and an appreciation for their risk-taking. As people grow more supportive, the county may discover new ways to nurture entrepreneurs with infrastructure and services.</p>	
<p>Potential Partners: mayors, county commissioners, chamber leaders</p>	
<p>Potential Resources: Energizing Entrepreneurship book and website for making the case data and examples for celebrations Economic Profile of Fremont County</p>	
<p>Concerns: Need to make the case for E-ship to the leaders well, so that they can make it to those they meet.</p>	
Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem?</i> i.e. size of community reward) Score 1-10	4
Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed?</i> i.e. probability of success) Score 1-10	9
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	3
Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	108
Action Steps	
a. Develop a case statement, with talking points, for commissioners, mayors, and chamber executives to use in educating the people of Fremont County about the importance of entrepreneurs and their presence in the community. Emphasize what an entrepreneur is, in order to de-mystify the word.	Not Done
b. Encourage all leaders to use their higher profile to build and support an entrepreneurial climate.	Not Done
c. Explore a United Fremont Chamber Entrepreneur-of-the-Year award for presentation at a Chamber banquet or other event.	Not Done
d. Respect all entrepreneurs' need for privacy while growing their business, but with their permission, celebrate their success at the appropriate time.	Not Done
e. Seek ways to get entrepreneurship discussed in school and with youth groups.	Not Done

Action Strategy

Goal: ED = Entrepreneurial Development	
Strategy ED6 Explore establishing a youth entrepreneurship program	
<p>Background/Concept: Youth are natural change agents, and can be powerful allies in building an entrepreneurial climate. Surveys show as many as 70% of high school youth would like to become self-employed. Building a pipeline of budding entrepreneurs must begin with youth. Youth entrepreneurship programs offer an active learning option for non-traditional students and self-employment represents a powerful symbol of a way to remain in the community upon graduation.</p>	
<p>Potential Partners: Fremont county schools Extension Service BYU Eastern Idaho Center for Entrepreneurship</p>	
<p>Potential Resources: REAL program, NFTE youth curricula, energizingentrepreneurs.org all offer success stories and curricula ideas. Craig Schroeder at RUPRI Center for Rural Entrepreneurship is a youth E expert. The Connecting Oregon for Rural Entrepreneurship (CORE) program on the Rural Development Initiatives (RDI) website will also have examples of youth programs.</p>	
<p>Concerns: The school district has not been an active player in the econ dev planning process, so will need the case for entrepreneurship made to them. There will likely be resistance to adding new class options into a budget and test-driven system. Yet there are partners who could make a simple program into a rewarding enterprise for all.</p>	
Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem? i.e. size of community reward</i>) Score 1-10	5
Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed? i.e. probability of success</i>) Score 1-10	5
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	2
Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	50
Action Steps	
a. Search for a business or vocational teacher, or extension agent or 4-H instructor in Fremont County who may have the passion to give this a try.	Not Done
b. Approach school officials and make the case for E-ship and youth e-ship program in particular	Not Done
c. Conduct grant writing for small grant to pay for teacher training, curricula materials, and business start-up expenses	Not Done
d. Approach banks, chambers, private businesses about supporting young entrepreneurs with mentoring, guest appearances, \$, and in-kind donations	Not Done
e. Organize first class in or out of school, announce opportunity and begin!	Not Done

Amenity In-migrants (Attracting Retirees and Lone Eagles)

Goal Rationale and Background:

Fremont County's population is relatively young, with a median age of 32.7 years, compared to 34.2 for the state, or 36.4 for the nation. However, its median age has been growing for the last 26 years as shown in the figure below.

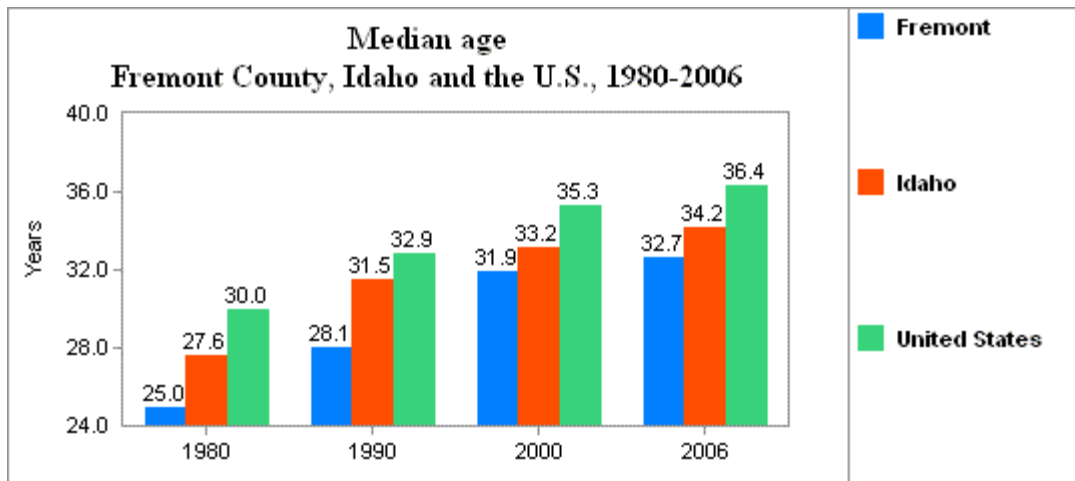


Figure RLE1

There has not been a sharp increase in the number of senior citizens, as one would expect in a retirement mecca, though the Island Park CCD does show growth in the age 55-70 cohort. It is speculated that many of the county's retirees are part-time residents whose primary residence is outside the county.

Nevertheless, it is clear that people who admire the natural resources and relaxed lifestyle of the region and who want to live here are changing the face of Fremont County. As recently as January 3, 2008, an Associated Press article reported that the communities surrounding Yellowstone National park were a magnet for active retirees. Non-labor income, that is dividends, interest, and rent, and government transfer payments, has risen sharply over time to account for 38% of the county economy by the year 2000. Senior citizens control most non-labor income. Part-year residents have also been contributing to the burgeoning construction activity in the county. The spending of part-year residents can not only keep construction workers busy, but they help keep numerous other retail and service businesses open. They help diversify and stabilize the economy with their steady income, though they may contribute to its seasonality. They create all sorts of entrepreneurial opportunities, and their energy and volunteerism can contribute directly to community vitality.

Research shows that people who move between states upon retirement are wealthier than average senior citizens, are more educated, and more likely to be married. These amenity migrants are diverse in their interests, but a significant portion seeks an active outdoor lifestyle and a climate with four seasons. They are drawn to 1) natural and cultural amenities, 2) a feeling of personal safety, 3) family and friends, 4) friendly,

small-town communities with a variety of quality housing options, and 5) a low cost of living. Access to health care is an important consideration. Retirees are often looking for opportunities to volunteer, especially on issues they care deeply about. Note that the values they seek match Fremont County's values quite well. Retirees tend to move to places they have become familiar with, or places that are recommended to them by friends and family. They tend to follow the familiar path of vacations, then longer visits, then purchasing a home and gradually increasing their time spent in the new location. Retirees in active communities will often migrate a second time back near family as their health and independence diminishes with age.

Lone Eagles are younger amenity in-migrants who are self-employed with portable jobs. They are often in a creative profession or one that relies on the professional network they have built in their careers. They can live anywhere. They are drawn to many of the same factors as retirees, but also need access to high-speed telecommunications and an airport within a couple hours drive. Families will also factor the quality of schools in their location decisions. (Explore publications USDA-ERS on creative professional and retirees.)

Fremont County, like so many other Western communities, has been benefiting passively from amenity in-migrants for many years. Island Park has long been a weekend and summer playground for folks living in Idaho Falls. Over time, its reputation has grown, likely from the exposure visitors get as they drive through the county to Yellowstone National Park.

A meeting with part-year residents in the summer of 2007 is included in the appendix and generated several ideas about desired services. Much of their concern simply has to do with being treated with respect and kindness as valued community members.

In a few places, communities have made a conscious effort to increase the flow of amenity in-migrants. States like Alabama have a retirement-friendly certification program, much like the Gem Community program. Towns like Fossil, Oregon, or Goldendale, Washington have attracted new retirees with modest marketing campaigns. The Bitterroot Valley in Montana has had considerable success. Fremont County could choose to embrace this unexpected source of new wealth by consciously building relationships with part-year residents, retirees, and Lone Eagles, and by putting out the word that they are welcome.

Amenity In-Migrants (Attracting Retirees & Lone Eagles) – To build & grow the stream of mobile families who appreciate Fremont County as visitors, and return as part-year & permanent residents.

AIM1: Fremont Ambassadors – To develop a group of willing seniors who are seasonal residents and provide them with marketing materials to spread the word about Fremont County during their annual winter trips south.

AIM2: Explore Senior RV Park – To encourage the expansion or development of additional RC park capacity to handle senior citizens wishing to summer in Fremont County.

AIM3: Guerilla Marketing Campaign Targeting Retirees – To develop a low-cost campaign to get the word about Fremont County to additional mobile senior citizens, preferably in partnership with existing seniors who can offer a peer perspective.

Other Action Ideas:

- More aware of the needs – medical, social opportunities, availability of information
- Expand and strengthen Senior Centers
- Develop a neighborhood network to enhance the feeling of security
- Support the development of a K-3 elementary school in Island Park to facilitate the re-location of young professional “Lone Eagle” families.
- Develop a grocery store/retail services in Island Park
- Develop private security service for part-year residents of Island Park

Action Strategy

Goal: AIM = Amenity In-Migrants	
Strategy AIM1 Fremont Ambassadors	
<p>Background/Concept: In 2007, Fremont County Economic Development issued a new set of community profiles. It would only take minor modifications in language and pictures, or a new insert, to point these community descriptions toward the older audience. Then the county has seniors who travel south every year for the winter. Many stay in RV parks or developments with a community center and social program. These seniors could become Fremont Ambassadors if equipped with presentation and marketing materials promoting Fremont County as a wonderful summer destination. They could offer to do a Fremont County night at their community center to present an entertaining slide show to their neighbors. This is an effective and low cost way to increase the stream of retirees and part-year residents.</p>	
<p>Potential Partners: Senior centers in Fremont County Fremont RV parks for identifying snowbirds who might become ambassadors</p>	
<p>Potential Resources: various Retirement Places Rated guides</p>	
<p>Concerns: The most common concern is that seniors will vote against bond elections. The research literature on this issue is mixed. Seniors can vote against tax increases, though long-term seniors who are aging-in-place are more likely to vote no. Seniors can be convinced to give back to the community with a vote for long term sustainability. A second concern is that aging seniors will become a burden on the community. In-migrants are far more likely to be able to afford personal care services. A last concern is simply the growth impacts of retiree development. Fremont County needs to decide for itself how much growth and under what conditions growth can be made acceptable.</p>	
Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem? i.e. size of community reward</i>) Score 1-10	5
Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed? i.e. probability of success</i>) Score 1-10	8
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	2
Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	80
Action Steps	
a. Research retirement places guides and marketing materials from other locations to get a sense of what attracts retirees and develop appropriate talking points to stress the advantages of Fremont County.	Not Done
b. Review existing marketing materials and decide what modifications are needed to speak to retirement re-location decisions, and what might go into a response packet	Not Done
c. Revise and print supplemental materials, develop entertaining and informative Powerpoint presentation and place on CDs,	Not Done

bundle into Ambassador packets together with instruction sheet.	
d. Locate and speak to potential Ambassadors. Explain the commitment is to simply conduct one or more presentations and be a positive word-of-mouth promoter of Fremont County	Not Done
e. Hold a meeting of Ambassadors to review presentation and printed materials, and send them forth with local contact numbers for follow-up	Not Done

Action Strategy

Goal: AIM = Amenity In-Migrants	
Strategy AIM2 Explore Senior RV Park	
<p>Background/Concept: Since BYU-Idaho has gone to a year-round plan and the dormitories can no longer be used for summer residences for senior citizens, there appears to be a need for other summer housing options. RV parks that cater to retirees are a good option as a replacement. In other parts of Idaho the same seniors return to the same RV park summer after summer. This builds the social connections and knowledge of community that may lead some to purchase a home here and eventually shift their permanent residence. Existing RV parks may want to designate or build an area of their facility that is focused on seniors. Long term RV park residents will develop a spending pattern much more like a local resident than a pass-through visitor. Providing RV capacity is a way to increase spending within the county and to bring new dollars into the local economy.</p>	
<p>Potential Partners: Existing RV park owners/operators BYUI may be interested in helping spread word of RV park space availability as part of the International Dance Festival and other summer activities. There is a logical connection to strategy OC4 Building an RV park at the county golf course, so the county may take this on directly. Note also the connection between the snowbirds that may stay at an RV park and the Fremont Ambassador strategy AIM1.</p>	
<p>Potential Resources: Idaho Parks and Rec can provide grant money for RV dump stations, but does not assist in development of private campgrounds.</p>	
<p>Concerns: Any private campground operator will be concerned about the ability to develop sufficient revenue in a camping season to justify the investment. They will also have concerns about utility hookups to handle waste disposal, water, electricity, and telecommunications.</p>	
Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem?</i> i.e. size of community reward) Score 1-10	5
Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed?</i> i.e. probability of success) Score 1-10	5
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	3
Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	75
Action Steps	
a. Talk to existing RV park operators and develop a countywide inventory of capacity and an assessment of interest in expansion.	Not Done
b. Use business facilitation methods to work with operators interested in expansion or new developers, and refer to business service providers who can help. Consider use of BYUI intern to conduct business plan.	Not Done

c. Factor the potential for seniors into the scale of the county RV park feasibility assessment.	Not Done
d.	Not Done
e.	Not Done

Action Strategy

Goal: AIM = Amenity In-Migrants	
Strategy AIM3 Guerilla Marketing Campaign Targeting Retirees	
<p>Background/Concept: The research on interstate migration of retirees is quite clear. Retirees begin looking for new locations several years prior to retirement. They rely on the word of family and friends first, then written articles, and begin by visiting and researching the place. Odd connections between retirement areas and cities are often created through this word-of-mouth, and a small trickle of people coming from certain place grows as they talk with their friends. Fremont County already has numerous part-year residents and annual visitors. Other places have developed very low-cost ways of reaching out to potential new markets. This strategy involves using the materials developed for Fremont Ambassadors to build a response package to send to inquirers. Then small ads may be placed in media narrowly targeted to active, mobile retirees. Ideally, a phone number or e-mail address is established where local seniors and part-year residents can answer inquiries. At the same time, a direct mail effort can be developed using mailing lists of people who have become acquainted with Fremont County in the past, e.g. high school or Ricks College alumni lists, or resort or RV park customer lists sorted by age. This strategy should be viewed as partially a tourism strategy as it will generate visits prior to summer-long stays.</p>	
<p>Potential Partners: Chambers and tourism groups</p>	
<p>Potential Resources: Existing county and city profile brochures, tourism literature, real estate fliers Parts of this strategy may be eligible for Idaho Travel Council funding retirement guidebooks that rate places Talk with Dick Gardner about his research and file of articles.</p>	
<p>Concerns: A marketing strategy should never be mounted without a clear idea of the target customer, how best to reach them and campaign costs. A clear notion of how responses will be handled is needed, preferably one that communicates the personal touch and hometown style of Fremont County. And the campaign should not be launched without consensus that there is capacity to handle new visitors and part-year retirees.</p>	
Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem?</i> i.e. size of community reward) Score 1-10	6
Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed?</i> i.e. probability of success) Score 1-10	5
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	2
Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	60
Action Steps	
a. Build on marketing materials from Fremont Ambassadors to construct a response package, again playing close attention to the research on what retirees are seeking in a new location.	Not Done
b. Work with Fremont Ambassador group about what marketing channels represent the best and most affordable ways to reach	Not Done

target customers.	
c. Explore the use of various mailing lists of people who are approaching retirement and have some familiarity with Fremont County, e.g HS or BYU alumni, resort or RV park repeat customer lists, friends of existing part-year residents	Not Done
d. Develop a way of responding, a phone number or more likely an e-mail address, that involves a number of Fremont seniors who are willing to e-mail or even call people who want to learn more about the area. Keep in mind that these seniors need to be educated, middle class, active retirees who are peers of those inquiring. Fixed-income, less educated seniors who have lived in Fremont all their lives are not peers in the same way with the ability to compare between locations. This is not a rap against local seniors, but the reality of being able to connect with the newcomers.	Not Done
e. Execute the guerilla marketing campaign. It's OK to try just one or a couple modest efforts and observe the results on a trial-and-error basis. This strategy has really worked in some very rural eastern communities.	Not Done

Value-Added Agriculture

Goal Rationale and Background:

Agriculture in Fremont County is still big business. In the year 2000, farm and agricultural services accounted for 23.7% of jobs. There were still 518 farm and ranch operations in the county in 2002. The figure below shows that gross farm income has bounced around in the \$80-160 million range but has slowly trended downward. Gross farm income was \$83 million in 2003, but has likely rebounded in 2006-7 with high grain prices. Net farm income has spiked even more erratically in the \$10-40 million range. Agriculture has been only a modest direct contributor to the county's \$242 million economy in 2003.

Farm Income in Fremont County

Income Breakout

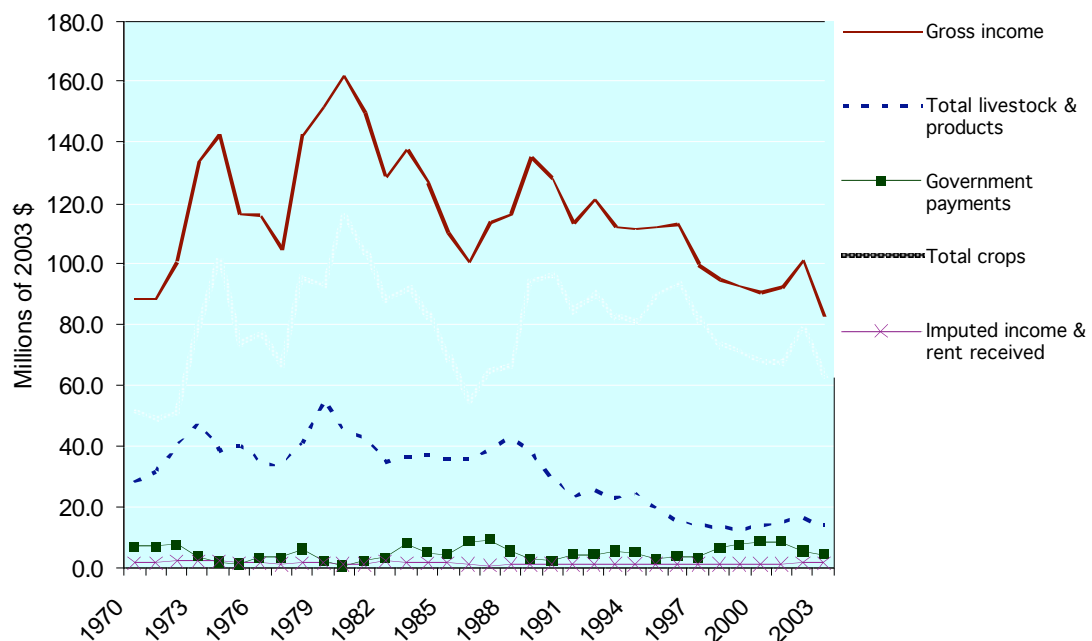


Figure AG1

Fremont County mainly produces barley, wheat, potatoes, hay, and cattle. In 2006, the county harvested 55,600 acres of barley, 45,900 acres of wheat, 30,400 acres of potatoes, and 25,500 acres of alfalfa hay. There were 13,400 head of cattle in 2006 in the county. The Ashton area remains an important seed potato growing region, while the Egin Bench continues to produce some of Idaho's finest russets.

Nevertheless, agriculture in Fremont is under growing development pressure especially in the south near Rexburg. Traditional commodity agriculture may become less sustainable over time, unless additional value-added enterprises can be created. The

opportunities for such enterprises are numerous, as Americans place more value on nutritious, safe, and local foods, and as they demonstrate a willingness to pay more for organic foods, artisan gourmet foods, and ethnic foods.

It will help if farmers and ranchers begin to view themselves as diversified land managers. They may still operate profit centers around commodity crops and livestock, but nearly every operator has the land to add a recreation and/or an energy profit center. Moreover, there may be farmers willing to experiment with organic production, or with direct marketing of produce to local consumers. Each farm or ranch operator must decide for themselves what new enterprises fit with their land, their management objectives, and their values.

The role of county economic development is not to become an expert on all forms of agriculture, but to create an on-going dialogue with local producers about the types of enterprises that may fit their situations and to keep an eye out for new opportunities. Occasionally, the ED specialist may be asked to facilitate an exploration of the feasibility of some type of enterprise or to organize an educational workshop, though this is more appropriately the domain of the Cooperative Extension Service. Strategies like farm/ranch recreation lay on the border with tourism, while a farmers market carries an aspect of community development. The point is that paying attention to agriculture is important not only for the local economy, but to maintain the rural lifestyle that residents value so highly.

Goal: Value-Added Agriculture - To encourage ways to diversify local agriculture.

Action Strategies:

AG1: Organic Potatoes and/or Barley

AG2: Encourage Membership in Country Natural Beef Cooperative

AG3: Farmers Market

AG4: Alternative Energy Enterprises

AG5: Encourage Farm and Ranch Recreation Enterprises

AG6: Feasibility of a Community Kitchen Incubator

Other Action Ideas:

- Community-owned/harvest cooperative (part of farmers market – AG3)
- Private land wildlife viewing in off season (a farm and ranch recreation enterprise AG6)
- Support policies for Conservation Easements (new State conservation trust legislation) to help preserve open spaces

Action Strategy

Goal: AG = Value-Added Agriculture	
Strategy AG1 Organic Potatoes and/or Barley	
<p>Background/Concept: Commercial agriculture remains an important part of the Fremont County economy, with potatoes and barley two of the principal crops. With recent development pressure, farmers need more profitable alternatives to remain in business. Certified organic acres in Idaho grew by 22% from 2004 to 2005 to a total of 97,031 acres. Prices for organic potatoes and barley are much higher. A recent study by the USDA Economic Research Service showed the highest margin for an organic crop was for potatoes. Organic potatoes grew from 240 acres in 2006 to an estimated 490 acres in 2007. There were 12,500 acres of organic barley grow in 2006 for both feed and malting. Anheuser Busch is said to be actively seeking contracts for organic malt barley, and organic feed barley is in demand by organic dairies. Yet there are no organic growers north of Blackfoot.</p>	
<p>Potential Partners: Mike Health, organic potato producer, King Hill, 543-4107 Lou Anderson, S&L Commodities, organic feed barley, Fairfield 764-3913, 539-2245 cell Anheuser-Busch Co, Idaho Falls 524-1080, organic malting barley contracts Margaret Misner, ID Dept of Ag, 332-8620 Don Morashita, USDA Ag Research Service, Kimberly, works on organic weed control USDA-RD Value-Added Producer Grants offer 50% match for feasibility studies, etc.</p>	
<p>Concerns: The main concern expressed in Fremont county concerns weed control. Nematodes may also be an issue for spuds. There is a time period for which a field must be chemical-free before it can be certified for organic production. Are a few Fremont County growers willing to try something new?</p>	
Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem?</i> i.e. size of community reward) Score 1-10	4
Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed?</i> i.e. probability of success) Score 1-10	8
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	3
Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	96
Action Steps	
a. Talk with producers, grower groups, Farm Bureau to assess interest	Not Done
b. Work with ISDA, Mike Health, Lou anderson to organize a workshop on organic commodity crops	Not Done
c. Consider a Value Added producer Grant as a way to get organized and assess potential	Not Done

Action Strategy

Goal: AG = Value-Added Agriculture	
Strategy (letter/number identifier, e.g. T1) AG2 Encourage membership in Country Natural Beef cooperative	
Background/Concept: In 2007 there were 12,200 beef cattle in Fremont County. There are numerous cow-calf operations with beef cows totaling 7,300. Country Natural Beef is a cooperative of cattle ranchers based in central Oregon. The members grow their cattle with natural, but not organic, methods, using sustainable grazing practices and short finishing on grain. Each member participates in point-of-sale marketing events. They sell their branded beef as a high-quality product that supports family ranchers. CNB sales are growing 16%/year, sold 40,000 head last year, and Whole Foods; the up-scale grocery store chain is their biggest customer. (This beef is also sold at the Boise Coop.) They currently have Idaho members in the coop. This is a way to participate in a value-added livestock enterprise that increases the sustainability of Fremont County's beef industry. Yet it is much simpler than creating a new local beef brand from scratch. Memberships have to come from a nomination by an existing member of the 76 ranch cooperative and a two year trial membership. This business cooperative is also a tight-knit community of ranchers with common values in sustainability of the land, their families & lifestyle, and their communities.	
Potential Partners: Country Natural Beef, Doc and Connie Hatfield, 541-576-2455, www.oregoncountrybeef.com see www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/pub/jul06/jul06.pdf for an article on Country Natural Beef.	
Potential Resources: Idaho Extension Service	
Concerns: Need to investigate where cattle are slaughtered and processed. Appears to be Nyssa, Oregon, just across the Oregon line at western end of the Treasure Valley, but it may be Boardman OR. Beef Northwest Feeder is the finishing operation and AB Foods in Toppenish, WA does the processing.	
Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem?</i> i.e. size of community reward) Score 1-10	2
Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed?</i> i.e. probability of success) Score 1-10	9
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	2
Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	36
Action Steps	
a. Investigate Country Natural Beef and talk with their manager. Understand what steps are needed for a ranch family to join.	Not Done
b. If promising, obtain their marketing materials and assess interest among county ranchers.	Not Done
c. Find a CNB member (preferably in Idaho) who would be willing to sponsor the first Fremont county members	Not Done

Action Strategy

Goal: AG = Value-Added Agriculture	
Strategy (letter/number identifier, e.g. T1) AG3 Farmers Market	
<p>Background/Concept: Farmers markets have grown in popularity across the country in recent years, as a direct marketing strategy that increases the profit margins of fresh fruits and vegetables and offers an outlet for sales of locally processed artisan foods. Many farmers markets grow to include vendors of arts and crafts, local entertainment, food vendors, flower growers, and serve as an important social activity in the community.</p> <p>An early decision would concern location. A Fremont County market would not only serve local residents, but perhaps more importantly provide an outlet to the stream of visitors heading to Island Park and Yellowstone on weekends. Any location must be visible and provide easy access to those new to the area. A location near the Ashton turnoff or at the Doughboy Park in St. Anthony might be good. Alternating these two locations could be better. A cooperative roadside stand could also work, but loses the potential for synergy in creating an event for local residents and additional vendors.</p> <p>This strategy also offers an opportunity for the direct marketing of field-run potatoes in the fall. It also offers an outlet for those whose love of gardening would lead them to try a business venture, and for greenhouse growers.</p>	
<p>Potential Partners: St Anthony or Ashton Chamber of Commerce Local farmers and gardeners FAA Organic producers</p>	
<p>Potential Resources: Idaho Department of Agriculture Marketing Division offer technical assistance on farmers markets.</p>	
<p>Concerns: A farmers market needs a sponsoring entity, who will organize volunteers, set fees, pay insurance, and communicate with vendors. A long-term commitment is needed because most markets grow and mature over several years.</p>	
Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem?</i> i.e. size of community reward) Score 1-10	4
Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed?</i> i.e. probability of success) Score 1-10	7
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	3
Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	84
Action Steps	
a. Talk with ISDA marketing staff and learn about the steps and requirements involved in starting and operating a farmers market.	Not Done
b. Talk to Ashton and St Anthony Chambers to assess interest	Not Done
c. Select location best for customers, vendors, & community	Not Done

d. Notify vendors and hold informational meeting to assess interest	Not Done
e. Set policies and fees, and spread word among potential vendors	Not Done
f. Develop simple marketing materials, portable signs/banners, etc	Not Done

Action Strategy

Goal: AG = Value-Added Agriculture	
Strategy (letter/number identifier, e.g. T1) AG4 Alternative Energy Enterprises	
Background/Concept: Farmers and ranchers can increase their sustainability by adding one or more alternative energy enterprises to their operation. This strategy builds on the Full Farm Audit concept, but takes amore proactive approach. The State shows geothermal potential in SE Fremont County and can help get anemometers constructed to assess wind potential.	
Potential Partners: Fall River Electric Cooperative Rocky Mountain Power Boise State U College of Engineering runs Wind for Schools program	
Potential Resources: Fall River Electric has the ability to raise capital from the Rural Electric Association for feasible projects. ID Office on Energy USDA-RD has new energy programs approved in the farm bill, e.g. new 9006 for local governments and schools	
Concerns: Capital will need to be risked to see returns to most ideas, and they will require management attention and entrepreneurial energy. Each enterprise should be approached like a new business, with a plan and projected income and cost budgets.	
Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem?</i> i.e. size of community reward) Score 1-10	4
Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed?</i> i.e. probability of success) Score 1-10	5
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	2
Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	40
Action Steps	
a. Work with the Idaho Office of Energy, ISDA, and Extension to hold an educational workshop on alternative energy ideas	Not Done
b. Keep farmers and ranchers informed of the progress on the cellulosic plant in eastern Idaho and any opportunities to contract for woody biomass.	Not Done
c. Explore the possibilities of building wind turbines on farms and ranches, possibly as part of Fall River Electric Cooperative	Not Done
d. Explore the geothermal energy potential in southeast Fremont County, including the potential for geothermal greenhouses	Not Done

Action Strategy

Goal: AG = Value-Added Agriculture	
Strategy AG5 Encourage Farm and Ranch Recreation Enterprises	
<p>Background/Concept: Farm and ranch recreation falls into the cusp between tourism development and agriculture. Luckily, the Idaho Department of Agriculture has a longstanding program in this area. Most operators can add some sort of enterprise should they care to-- from fee hunting to farm tours, horseback rides, cattle drives, pick-your-own pumpkins, cabin rentals on the back 40, even a farm-based B&B. These are not get-rich-quick businesses (average net income from recreation enterprise is around \$3,000), but can add another profit center and a great deal of satisfaction for those who like to work with people.</p>	
<p>Potential Partners: Idaho Outfitters & Guides Licensing Board, Jake Howard, 327-7380, www.oglb.gov Idaho B&B Association</p>	
<p>Potential Resources: Idaho Department of Agriculture Marketing Division, Laura Johnson Idaho Extension Bulletin No. 699, "Assessing the Potential for Farm and Ranch Recreation" Paul Patterson, Idaho extension economist, Blackfoot Farm-Based Recreation: A Statistical Profile, ERS Report 53, Dec 2007</p>	
<p>Concerns: Care must be taken to comply with Idaho Outfitters and Guides licensing requirements on guided activities. Insurance is not usually an obstacle. Management of the enterprise needs to be assigned to a people-oriented member of the family.</p>	
Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem? i.e. size of community reward</i>) Score 1-10	2
Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed? i.e. probability of success</i>) Score 1-10	7
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	3
Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	42
Action Steps	
a. Talk to Laura Johnson at ISDA, and inquire about hosting a workshop in Fremont County	Not Done
b. Talk with local farm groups and assess the level of interest	Not Done
c. Explore arranging peer visits of farm and ranch recreation enterprises in eastern Idaho	Not Done
d.	Not Done
e.	Not Done

Action Strategy

Goal: AG = Value-Added Agriculture	
Strategy AG6 Feasibility of Community Kitchen Incubator	
<p>Background/Concept: A kitchen incubator is a licensed commercial kitchen space that is typically established in a business incubator to allow entrepreneurs to run small batches of food products. Often it will have wet and dry lines for both types of products. Customers rent the facility as needed to create their products, such as jams, jellies, salsas, muffin mixes, spices, etc. Some kitchens pool the purchasing of packaging, ingredients and the like. Technical assistance is usually offered on issues such as label design, marketing channels, and pricing. Major food incubators exist in Idaho in Caldwell and Sandpoint, and Arco has a small facility.</p>	
<p>Potential Partners: Idaho Small Business Development Centers The Development Company, Terry Budiker Panhandle Area Council, Jim Deffenbaugh, He has consulted numerous times on kitchen incubators and would be a good resource for feasibility assessment.</p>	
Potential Resources:	
<p>Concerns: Kitchen incubators are a significant capital investment. The Caldwell facility took several years to gain the financing was difficult to cash flow operations, and ownership has since transferred to the U of I. Develop and refine a business plan carefully before proceeding. This is a fairly complex economic development undertaking.</p>	
Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem?</i> i.e. size of community reward) Score 1-10	5
Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed?</i> i.e. probability of success) Score 1-10	4
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	1
Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	20
Action Steps	
a. Talk with Jim Deffenbaugh and other experienced kitchen incubator operators	Not Done
b. Assess the need/demand for a kitchen incubator with meetings and/or a survey of potential users	Not Done
c. Apply for an RBOG grant for a feasibility study	Not Done
d.	Not Done
e.	Not Done

Community Improvements

Community economic development is a holistic subject, requiring systems thinking. The physical infrastructure underlying Fremont County's communities has much to do with the economic success and vitality of the community. Communities that have stewarded their resources frugally, but recognized emerging needs, invested in quality solutions, and spent the money needed for maintenance, tend to be more successful than towns that allow problems to fester into crises, whine about the cost of public projects, foolishly scrimp on maintenance, and expect solutions to come from outside. Too often problems that have been ignored become very expensive to solve, causing significant increases in tax burden and citizen revolts.

Those trying to spur economic development are not usually the same as those responsible for infrastructure development. Many of the strategies suggested under this goal will be led by city or county utility managers. They are identified here to highlight those aspects of physical infrastructure that may become bottlenecks to development within Fremont County.

The impetus for this goal came from the group realization that with the large numbers of commuters leaving Fremont County each day, the cities of south Fremont County had become bedroom communities. This was not a new image that all wanted to accept, though some recognized the value of embracing the trend and trying to make the best of it. There is value in being a net receiver of labor income earned outside the county. There is much learning that could still occur around what it means to be a "bedroom community." The group preferred the notion that the communities of south Fremont County, and especially the downtowns, were the "living rooms" for commuters, where much of their community lives take place.

The best single contribution from the economic development might be to adopt the national Main Street program to the communities of St. Anthony and Ashton. The boxes below describes the four points of the Main Street program and the eight principles for success using this program. The reader will see that these principles are very consistent with the Tupelo model (see Approach and Process chapter) upon which this plan is based.

The National Main Street Program's Four Points

The National Trust Main Street Center offers a comprehensive commercial district revitalization strategy that has been widely successful in towns and cities nationwide. Described below are the four points of the Main Street approach which work together to build a sustainable and complete community revitalization effort.

Organization involves getting everyone working toward the same goal and assembling the appropriate human and financial resources to implement a Main Street revitalization program. A governing board and standing committees make up the fundamental organizational structure of the volunteer-driven program. Volunteers are coordinated and supported by a paid program director as well. This structure not only divides the workload and clearly delineates responsibilities, but also builds consensus and cooperation among the various stakeholders.

Promotion sells a positive image of the commercial district and encourages consumers and investors to live, work, shop, play and invest in the Main Street district. By marketing a district's unique characteristics to residents, investors, business owners, and visitors, an effective promotional strategy forges a positive image through advertising, retail promotional activity, special events, and marketing campaigns carried out by local volunteers. These activities improve consumer and investor confidence in the district and encourage commercial activity and investment in the area.

Design means getting Main Street into top physical shape. Capitalizing on its best assets — such as historic buildings and pedestrian-oriented streets — is just part of the story. An inviting atmosphere, created through attractive window displays, parking areas, building improvements, street furniture, signs, sidewalks, street lights, and landscaping, conveys a positive visual message about the commercial district and what it has to offer. Design activities also include instilling good maintenance practices in the commercial district, enhancing the physical appearance of the commercial district by rehabilitating historic buildings, encouraging appropriate new construction, developing sensitive design management systems, and long-term planning.

Economic Restructuring strengthens a community's existing economic assets while expanding and diversifying its economic base. The Main Street program helps sharpen the competitiveness of existing business owners and recruits compatible new businesses and new economic uses to build a commercial district that responds to today's consumers' needs. Converting unused or underused commercial space into economically productive property also helps boost the profitability of the district.

Coincidentally, the four points of the Main Street approach correspond with the four forces of real estate value, which are social, political, physical, and economic.

NATIONAL MAIN STREET PROGRAM'S EIGHT PRINCIPLES OF SUCCESS

The National Trust Main Street Center's experience in helping communities bring their commercial corridors back to life has shown time and time again that the Main Street Four-Point Approach succeeds. That success is guided by the following eight principles, which set the Main Street methodology apart from other redevelopment strategies. For a Main Street program to be successful, it must whole-heartedly embrace the following time-tested Eight Principles.

- ⇒ **Comprehensive:** No single focus — lavish public improvements, name-brand business recruitment, or endless promotional events — can revitalize Main Street. For successful, sustainable, long-term revitalization, a comprehensive approach, including activity in each of Main Street's Four Points, is *essential*.
- ⇒ **Incremental:** Baby steps come before walking. Successful revitalization programs begin with basic, simple activities that demonstrate that "new things are happening " in the commercial district. As public confidence in the Main Street district grows and participants' understanding of the revitalization process becomes more sophisticated, Main Street is able to tackle increasingly complex problems and more ambitious projects. This incremental change leads to much longer-lasting and dramatic positive change in the Main Street area.
- ⇒ **Self-help:** No one else will save your Main Street. Local leaders must have the will and desire to mobilize local resources and talent. That means convincing residents and business owners of the rewards they'll reap by investing time and money in Main Street — the heart of their community. Only local leadership can produce long-term success by fostering and demonstrating community involvement and commitment to the revitalization effort.
- ⇒ **Partnerships:** Both the public and private sectors have a vital interest in the district and must work together to achieve common goals of Main Street's revitalization. Each sector has a role to play and each must understand the other's strengths and limitations in order to forge an effective partnership.
- ⇒ **Identifying and capitalizing on existing assets:** Business districts must capitalize on the assets that make them unique. Every district has unique qualities like distinctive buildings and human scale that give people a sense of belonging. These local assets must serve as the foundation for all aspects of the revitalization program.
- ⇒ **Quality:** Emphasize quality in every aspect of the revitalization program. This applies to all elements of the process — from storefront designs to promotional campaigns to educational programs. Shoestring budgets and "cut and paste" efforts reinforce a negative image of the commercial district. Instead, concentrate on quality projects over quantity.
- ⇒ **Change:** Skeptics turn into believers and attitudes on Main Street will turn around. At first, almost no one believes Main Street can really turn around. Changes in attitude and practice are slow but definite — public support for change will build as the Main Street program grows and consistently meets its goals. Change also means engaging in better business practices, altering ways of thinking, and improving the physical appearance of the commercial district. A carefully planned Main Street program will help shift public perceptions and practices to support and sustain the revitalization process.

Implementation: To succeed, Main Street must show visible results that can only come from completing projects. Frequent, visible changes are a reminder that the revitalization effort is under way and succeeding. Small projects at the beginning of the program pave the way for larger ones as the revitalization effort matures, and that constant revitalization activity creates confidence in the Main Street program and ever-greater levels of participation.

Priority Infrastructure Issues

On June 12, 2007, an overview of county infrastructure systems was presented to the FEAC ad hoc planning committee by Joshua Chase of the Fremont Planning Department. Out of that presentation, the group identified the following as infrastructure priorities from an economic development standpoint.

Sewer and Solid Waste Capacity in Island Park. Fremont County operates two sewer systems in the Island Park area. The Mack's Inn system is running at 94% of its capacity for average daily load. The Last Chance system is operating at 75% of capacity. Additional application of snow effluent in the winter may increase system capacities to a small degree. Some of the existing subdivisions within the service areas of these two systems have homes built on only about one-third of the platted lots, according to Fremont County Planning Department. There is little to no remaining capacity to even meet the county's obligations to the remaining platted lots, let alone approve new subdivisions or developments that are within the service areas of the sewer systems. Both sewer connection and use fees are very high by state standards.

In addition, the Island Park landfill is expected to reach its capacity within three to five years. A system of solid waste transfer stations will be required at that time if expansion is restricted.

Affordable Housing. The increase in BYU-Idaho commuters has served to absorb much of the available housing in south Fremont County. Property values in the resort areas within the caldera have made housing difficult to afford for the permanent labor force there. Finding affordable housing for seasonal workers in both private businesses and the land management agencies is especially difficult. (This point was re-enforced at the tourism development workshop on January 10, 2008.) Existing programs to provide affordable housing do not address seasonal workers.

Island Park School. There is an acute need for a K-3 elementary school in the Island Park area. Children must now be bussed to Ashton, which means long commutes and long days for very young students. There are several barriers to getting a school built, including 1) finding land, 2) getting a bond passed to fund construction, and 3) meeting state guidelines for numbers of students. An alternative could be to bus students in the northern part of Island Park to West Yellowstone, but again there are obstacles of tuition reimbursement across state lines. Nevertheless, the lack of a school creates a significant barrier to families considering moving into the caldera. It becomes a Catch-22 situation, because without the presence of a school, families will not move to Island Park and the number of students cannot increase to the critical mass needed to for state guidelines. It is in the County's best interests to keep this issue before the Fremont School District and to continue the search for creative solutions.

Adaptive Re-use of Historic Buildings. There are a number of older buildings in most communities in the county that are vacant and/or in various stages of disrepair. Finding new uses for these buildings, preferably ones that add jobs or improve the quality of life,

is important to the future of Fremont County. Investments in downtown corridors tend to become contagious, creating a positive cycle of investment, community self-image, and activity. In most cases, these adaptive re-use plans are best initiated by private developers, who are in the best position to sort through feasibility issues. The county and cities may play a catalytic role by removing barriers to development or by gaining access to public funding in a partnership project. Occasionally, the public or non-profit sectors will take the lead for public purpose uses like community centers, public theaters, senior centers, or health facilities.

Well Permits for New Developments. The process of obtaining new well permits for developments throughout the county will require mitigation plans under the new rules for conjunctive management of surface and ground water by the Idaho Department of Water Resources.

Wildfire Risk. Wildland fires affecting the rural/urban interface are a large and growing problem in the county. The combination of more and larger structures in the forest and fuels build-up associated with forest health issues has served to increase the risk. It is further exacerbated by proposed changes in Forest Service policy to let lightning fires burn and to not risk firefighter lives with actions to protect structures. This may lead to either increased rates or dropped fire insurance coverage by insurers. Situations where narrow roads lack fire truck turnaround spaces and only contain a single ingress/egress are an issue in the Island Park area. Firefighters will not enter areas under those conditions. Absentee ownership is a problem for implementing individual *Firewise* protection plans.

Community Improvements- To support the development of safe, healthy, vibrant, and walkable communities in Fremont County.

1. To improve the downtowns of Fremont County, which serve as our “living rooms.”
2. To improve the attractiveness of our communities to new and existing families.
3. To address key infrastructure needs that may limit the county’s economic development

Action Strategies:

CI1 Develop an Active Main Street Program

CI2 Encourage a Community Review for St. Anthony

CI3 Encourage the Development of Affordable Housing

CI4 Adaptive Re-use of Historic Buildings

CI5 Develop a Community Store for Fremont County

Other Action Ideas:

- Develop Community-wide WIFI systems
- Match store hours to customer needs, balanced against community vision of “Business Hours” (Main Street strategy)
- Seek AIC-Sponsored “Bedroom Community Peer Group” to share ideas & best practices (part of Main Street program)
- Enhance image of St A as artisan community, e.g. art gallery, quilt shop (Main Street and business network strategies)
- Support processes that allow mitigation plans to be developed and new well permits to be issued.
- Support enhancements to sewer treatment capacity in the Island Park community.
- Support the development of solid waste transfer stations and recycling programs in the Island Park community.
- Support community dialogue and innovative ways to bring an elementary school to the Island Park community.
- Transportation – commuter & recreational shuttle
- Use low crime statistics as a quality of life measure



Action Strategy

Goal: CI = Community Improvements	
Strategy C11 Develop an Active Main Street Program	
<p>Background/Concept: The communities of St. Anthony and Ashton have central business districts that are major public assets to community residents. With fresh attention, collaborative thinking, and some new investment, these two downtowns can be set onto an upward spiral of vitality as more activity spurs more investment and better appearance, leading to more activity and spending. The National Trust for Historic Preservation has a long established and proven program called the Main Street Program. This program has measurable success, with claims of generating \$25.76 in new investment for every dollar put into this program. It uses a four-point program and holistic approach to enhance the appearance, market the commercial district, and slowly re-structure the economic base with mixed-use development. A good Main Street program will connect many of the strategies in this plan and build synergy among them-- from infrastructure improvements to affordable housing, a farmer's market, entrepreneurship, attracting amenity in-migrants, or even a community store. A significant, intentional, and long-term commitment to this program may be one of the best investments Fremont County could make.</p> <p>The Main Street program can be explored using the materials in the Main Street Resource Library until local commitment grows to become an official "Start-Up" community. In fact, 41 states have coordinated Main Street programs, but Idaho is not yet one of them. In time, a state appropriation for this program may yield state resources for cost-sharing formal use of the program. Idaho Falls, Oldtown Pocatello, Twin Falls, Coeur d'Alene, and Sandpoint currently have full-time Main Street program directors. A number of smaller Idaho communities have expressed interest.</p>	
<p>Potential Partners: National Trust for Historic Preservation Idaho Department of Commerce</p>	
<p>Potential Resources: Jeff Patlovich, Fremont County planning director is very familiar with this program.</p>	
<p>Concerns: It may be difficult to go slow and take the baby steps advised by Main Street. It may also be counter-intuitive to slow down to gather the support of all the business community and to hear their concerns. However, this sort of foundational work is critical to long-term success. This program represents a multi-year effort. It is likely to ultimately require a local improvement district and major CDBG grants. Trying to force major improvements before community readiness has grown, will prove counter-productive.</p>	
Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem? i.e. size of community reward</i>) Score 1-10	7
Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed? i.e. probability of success</i>) Score 1-10	5
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	3
Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	105
Action Steps	

<p>a. Enroll Fremont County as a dues-paying member in the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street Program. This allows access to an extensive library of materials.</p>	<p>X = Done</p>
<p>b. Download, print, and read extensively from the Main Street library looking for relevant first steps and comparable case studies. Talk up the program and begin to demonstrate its principles in action. Share materials with community groups as appropriate.</p>	<p>Not Done</p>
<p>c. Contact the Main Street coordinator in Idaho Falls and ask her to offer an orientation workshop in St Anthony and Ashton. (This will likely require a small honorarium for her time.) Market to downtown business owners, Chamber members, and local elected officials.</p>	<p>Not Done</p>
<p>d. Use the experience of Jeff Patlovich (who has run a Main Street program) as a sounding board for proposed actions and to brainstorm first steps to engage both communities.</p>	<p>Not Done</p>
<p>e. Consider a Main Street training as a professional development investment for the economic development specialist.</p>	<p>Not Done</p>
<p>f. Help the City of St. Anthony apply to IRP and AIC for a Community Review, and assist the City in organizing a home team. Identify downtown revitalization, community identity and attitudes, and connecting with the Sand Dunes as priorities. The Community Review could be replaced by a Nat'l Main St Community Audit.</p>	<p>Not Done</p>
<p>g.</p>	<p>Not Done</p>

Action Strategy

Goal: CI = Community Improvements	
Strategy CI2 Community Review for St. Anthony	
<p>Background/Concept: The Idaho Community Review program was adapted in 2000 by the Idaho Rural Partnership, working in conjunction with the Idaho Department of Commerce and the Association of Idaho Cities, from a highly successful program used in Texas, Wyoming, and Washington states. It is intended to assist communities that have become Gem Communities and accomplished some successes, but need a fresh set of eyes to help reinvigorate community efforts. The Community Review is initiated by an application from the city to the Association of Idaho Cities and IRP that is approved by city resolution. The application names three areas of interest, such as local economic development, infrastructure, housing, community design & identity, land use planning, education, transportation, communication, health care, natural resources, arts, historic, and recreation resources, seniors & youth, and civic life & community involvement, for examination in the review, as well as home team members for each of the three areas and team leads. If accepted, a visiting team is recruited by IRP consisting of city elected officials and staff from other communities in Idaho, agency and private sector experts relevant to the three areas. These 15-20 people volunteer their time for the Community Review. The city is responsible for developing the program logistics and hosting the review team for meals. The Community Review involves the three subject teams having different agendas for a day of tours, interviews, and learning. A public meeting is held in the evening. The visiting team then spends the next day developing its recommendations and presents their findings at a second public event. The Community review is then written into a report presented to the community. This program was very useful to generating new interest in community improvements in Ashton, and it has been done in several other Idaho communities, most recently Soda Springs. In a way, the Community Review is a way of gaining a consulting overview report worth many thousands of dollars.</p>	
<p>Potential Partners: This strategy would have to be led by the City of St. Anthony and Mayor Bill Beck. However, the County could support the application, allow its county ED specialist to help with the application and planning logistics. The County could provide meeting space and possibly even financial support for one of the meals or refreshments.</p>	
<p>Potential Resources: The City of Ashton has been through the process and can offer valuable guidance. Association of Idaho Cities can also be of service. The Department of Commerce is an important partner in the Community Review, Jerry Miller</p>	
<p>Concerns: There is a modest cost to hosting a community review. Most cities have been able to gather corporate support to cover this. A second and real issue is that the Community Review tends to uncover the issues at work in a community, often the ones the community prefers not to examine. It takes courage on the part of local elected officials and leaders to welcome strangers into the community and take seriously the observations they have about one's community.</p>	
Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem?</i> i.e. size of community reward) Score 1-10	4

Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed?</i> i.e. probability of success) Score 1-10	8
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	3
Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	96
Action Steps	
a. Gain the support of Mayor Beck and the passage of a city resolution applying for a review. Pick the three areas of emphasis for the review.	Not Done
b. Recruit a Home Team leader and three subject area team leaders	Not Done
c. Wait for the application to be approved and a review scheduled	Not Done
d. Work with the leadership team to develop the agenda for the review and in particular to design the three subject team itineraries. Arrange logistics of the public meetings and space for the visiting team deliberations.	Not Done
e. Fundraise contributions to cover expenses	Not Done
f. Market the community review and get the community engaged in the process.	Not Done
g.	Not Done

Action Strategy

Goal: CI = Community Improvements	
Strategy CI3 Encourage the Development of Affordable Housing	
<p>Background/Concept: The need for affordable housing alternatives is a county-wide challenge. The increase in BYU-Idaho commuters has served to absorb much of the available housing in south Fremont County. While low income housing projects exist in St Anthony, they may not be sufficient to demand. Moreover, there are numerous properties in need of weatherization and improvements. For the working poor of Fremont County, active efforts to improve the quality and quantity of affordable housing may be the best way to improve their standard of living, given the relatively low wage structure of the region.</p> <p>Property values in the resort areas within the caldera have made housing difficult to afford for the permanent labor force there. Finding affordable housing for seasonal workers in both private businesses and the land management agencies is especially difficult. (This point was re-enforced at the tourism development workshop on January 10, 2008.)</p> <p>Affordable housing intersects with the Main Street program in the vacant spaces in the upper floors of many downtown buildings. ADA disability concerns presents obstacles to rehabilitating these spaces, but many rural communities have found ways to over come them. Creating affordable "loft" space is a way to bring younger and more creative professionals to live in the downtown core, adding to the vitality and workability of downtown areas.</p>	
<p>Potential Partners: Eastern Idaho Community Action Partnership, Russ Spain, 522-5391 USDA- Rural Development, Roni Atkins, Housing Programs Specialist, Boise 378-5627 Partners for Prosperity</p>	
<p>Potential Resources: Banks are very interested in affordable housing issues and often support such efforts as part of their Community Reinvestment Act requirements. Idaho Housing and Finance Association has numerous programs available, Erik Kingston, 331-4706, erikk@ihfa.org</p>	
<p>Concerns: Existing programs to provide affordable housing do not easily address seasonal workers.</p>	
Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem?</i> i.e. size of community reward) Score 1-10	5
Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed?</i> i.e. probability of success) Score 1-10	5
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	3
Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	75
Action Steps	
a. Explore interest in forming an Affordable Housing Task Force to study the options for addressing housing issues.	Not Done
b. Explore funding options to conduct an affordable housing assessment for	Not Done

the county.	
c. Talk with EICAP about increasing the number of weatherization projects done in Fremont County.	Not Done
d. Explore with USDA-RD and EICAP the possibility of getting a Self-help Housing project initiated in Fremont County, whereby applicants substitute sweat equity for a down payment and help one another build their homes.	Not Done
e. Talk with IHFA and the Association of Idaho Cities about forming a statewide group to look at the problems of resort communities in supplying seasonal housing for employees.	Not Done
f. Explore the issues associated with developing upper story lofts and apartments in downtown buildings through the Main Street library and other sources. Explore their applicability in downtown St. Anthony and Ashton.	Not Done
g.	Not Done

Action Strategy

Goal: CI = Community Improvements
Strategy CI4 Adaptive Re-Use of Historic Buildings
<p>Background/Concept:</p> <p>Because both St. Anthony and Ashton were larger towns in their heyday, there are a number of historic commercial buildings, mostly brick, with nice facades and cornice work. Several of these buildings have had their street fronts covered with other materials during downtown renovations in the past, yet they appear to be structurally sound and have the potential to be remarkable historic buildings if restored. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> St Anthony Riverside Hotel, St. Anthony Old H&L Electric building, St. Anthony Silver Horseshoe building, St Anthony JC Penney building, St. Anthony Old Ashton Memorial Hospital building, Ashton Great Sensations building, Ashton <p>While the solution of what it takes to motivate owners, raise capital for investment, or find new economic uses will vary with each building, some entity needs to take the initiative to bring change. Typically, rumors swirl around the community as to ownership, intentions, or issues with the building. An organized, fact-finding effort and options brainstorming may be able to spur action. Oftentimes, these buildings can be adapted to mixed-use with retail on the bottom floors, offices or living spaces on the upper floors. Renovations can often qualify for tax credits if a historic property. Community groups may assist in renovations if some portion of the building is secured for a public use. This strategy should be an outgrowth of pursuing the Main Street program.</p>
<p>Potential Partners:</p> <p>Cities of St. Anthony and Ashton</p> <p>County assessor's office for information on ownership, assessed value, square footage, etc.</p> <p>Idaho Heritage Trust, Gaetha Pace, www.idahoheritage.org can help with both technical assistance and grant to preserve and restore historic buildings. The Fremont County Courthouse, Roxy Theater, Oddfellows Hall, Ashton Archives, Jonnie Sack Cabin and several Harriman Park properties have received help in the past.</p> <p>Idaho Historical Society may also help</p> <p>Idaho Housing Finance Association, Erik Kingston may help clarify issues with creating affordable housing in upper floors.</p> <p>Local developers who have worked on historic renovations need to be identified. The search may need to extend to Idaho Falls. These buildings are notorious for becoming white elephants and it takes a labor of love to complete a historic renovation.</p>
Potential Resources:
<p>Concerns:</p> <p>Note the difference between this strategy, where the county role is to be a catalyst for change but not the lead in implementation, and the community store strategy, where the county has taken a lead role and ownership in a particular solution, which may or may not work. Here the county simply assembles facts, options, and resources with the help of stakeholders in hope that it leads to action by other economic players.</p> <p>A second concern is are the issues that will come up in a building inspection, including asbestos.</p>

Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem? i.e. size of community reward</i>) Score 1-10	5
Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed? i.e. probability of success</i>) Score 1-10	4
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	3
Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	60
Action Steps	
a. Make an inventory of historic, vacant buildings to target.	Not Done
b. Work with the cities and county assessor to determine ownership, condition, past uses, assess value, etc.	Not Done
c. Assemble a group of local realtors, developers, and relevant agency folks to discuss the information and brainstorm actions to reveal owner's intent, and to get movement.	Not Done
d. As a stopgap measure, gain permission to decorate abandoned store windows with displays for community groups, artwork from children, or historic collections as from the Hess Museum. This gains immediate improvements in appearance.	Not Done
e.	Not Done
f.	Not Done
g.	Not Done

Action Strategy

Goal: CI = Community Improvements
Strategy CI5 Community Store
<p>Background/Concept: A few isolated rural towns in the West have had some success in reducing retail leakage by creating community-owned stores. These stores generally sell clothing and other soft and household goods. They are organized as a cooperative, or through small-issue stock sales. Stores in Powell, WY, Plentywood, MT, and Ely, NV are successful examples of this model. Given the large amounts of retail leakage in Fremont County both to the south to Rexburg and Idaho Falls and to the north to West Yellowstone, a community store seems a plausible strategy on the surface. And a successful store can help improve the vitality of a downtown area.</p>
<p>Potential Partners: The purchaser from the Powell store now offers to play that role for other community stores in an attempt to gain economies of scale. St. Anthony Chamber of Commerce Residents willing to purchase stock in the venture.</p>
<p>Potential Resources: BYU student interns for business analysis Local bankers for review of business model and advice, plus possibly acting as fiscal agent Local attorneys for assistance in incorporating and issuing stock. Local owners of vacant retail buildings to partner on a store location.</p>
<p>Concerns: Relative Isolation- Plentywood and Ely are extremely isolated rural communities with no retail competition for many miles (e.g. 245 miles from Ely to Las Vegas), or 87 miles from Plentywood to Sidney, MT). St. Anthony is 12-15 minutes from big box retail stores in Rexburg like Wall-Mart, K-Mart, or CAL Ranch. The transportation cost to shopping elsewhere seems lower here than in successful locations. This reduces the store to competing on service and price with some of the largest retail chains in the nation. Also, this store will mostly be catering to existing residents whose income is 63% of the US average. Wealthier pass-by visitors will be less interested in this store's wares. Commuters - In contrast to the successful examples, nearly 1,500 people (or one-quarter of the workforce) are leaving Fremont County every day to work in larger communities. Their transportation cost to shopping elsewhere is zero, and most probably have habits of shopping out-of-county before returning home. Sound business plan - It is fine to have a student intern rough out a business plan, but that plan needs to be reviewed by lenders and those who are in the business of examining business plans. To date the numbers in the plan seem hypothetical and based on other locations, not specific to a particular building and workforce environment. For example, budgeting \$19,500 as the salary of an experienced retail store manager with a college degree seems very low. A county planner starts at \$25,000, a heavy equipment operator at \$27,000 plus a good benefits package. Neither does the plan consider actual rehabilitation costs, based on a building inspection, of moving into a downtown building. Skill set - Success will require a manager who has solid retail experience and commitment. Investment risk - Success requires raising a considerable amount of capital from local residents. Powell required \$400,000 many years ago, and the preliminary business plan was not rooted in</p>

actual costs. Given that lack of capital is a common problem with early business ventures, the amount needed for success is likely north of \$500,000.

Political Risk - By pushing for the development of this store before doing other groundlaying strategies to build community readiness, failure of the store may spill over to failure of the economic development program and loss of morale and trust by the community. If residents lose their capital investment in store stock, the repercussions could be severe. A county employee working on this strategy puts the reputation and trust in the county at risk. Remember that success is not just opening the store; it will be a visible project for years to come. Main Street Principle #2 suggests taking baby steps with small successes first.

Opportunity cost- A complex strategy such as this will require a large amount of time by the sparkplug and core group of volunteers. An estimate of one-quarter to one-half of an FTE for a minimum of 12-18 months appears reasonable, and has been proven out to date. If this is the time of the county public employee serving as economic development specialist, it begs the questions of what other strategies could have been pursued instead of the store. It speaks to the very meaning of acting strategically. Are the returns to a community store greater or lesser than the returns to working on other projects requiring the same amount of effort? Indeed, it represents an investment of a large amount of public dollars on one particular business. Any other new business with \$500,000 in annual sales will provide similar benefits to the economy. A more sound strategy might be to focus on building support networks for businesses and entrepreneurs and allowing them to make the business decisions. Picking winners is something most experienced economic development experts recommend against.

Benefits - If the goal is reducing retail leakage, a store with \$50,000/month in sales might increase total economic activity in the county by \$1 million/year including indirect and induced impacts. This is not the same as a benefit. The value-added of sales, perhaps \$200,000, could be compared to the \$250 million personal income of Fremont County to give a measure of the scale of this project. Similarly, a store could be a turnkey project to revitalizing a downtown, or the tried and true Main Street program approach could be begun, making small improvements in many areas and perhaps increasing the community readiness for this strategy over time. In terms of jobs, success will likely mean only 1-2 full-time and up to several part-time jobs.

Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem?</i> i.e. size of community reward) Score 1-10	4
Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed?</i> i.e. probability of success) Score 1-10	3
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	3
Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	36
Action Steps	
a. Assess the interest in the concept within the community. (2 people supported this at Luther Snow workshop in Ashton; the idea was not raised in St. A) St. Anthony Chamber is supportive.	X = Done
b. Secure a BYU intern to develop preliminary business plan	X = Done
c. Review plan with local bankers, SBDC consultants, The Development Company, etc. Refine budgets to fit planned location, esp salaries, utilities, space rent, and tenant improvement costs	Not Done
d. Create a Board of Directors and file articles of incorporation	* = In Progress
e. Name the "Fremont Emporium" and conduct media awareness campaign	X = Done

f. Secure a facility and obtain design and written bids for tenant improvements	Not Done
g. Issue stock and conduct capital campaign for sales to raise sufficient capital to cover store renovation and opening, inventory, and working capital for start-up period. Find credible fiscal agent, establish recordkeeping system records	Not Done
h. Hire experienced and reliable store manager	Not Done
i. Secure facility, make tenant improvements, stock with inventory and open store	Not Done
j. Schedule Fashion Show to display examples of inventory	X = Done

Organizational Capacity

Goal Rationale and Background:

Organizational capacity refers to the assets an organization can bring to bear on the issues being addressed. Developing organizational capacity means adding to the supply of different types of capital the organization can muster. This could mean increasing the financial resources of the organization or diversifying its revenue streams for more stability over time. It could mean improving the effective use of staff and volunteer effort. It could mean building more social capital from the web of relationships between among the organization, board and staff, and community. Or it could mean using its political capital to affect public opinion and get things done.

Because the action strategies employed here build resources to address any community issue, this may be the most important goal in the plan.

Several of the action strategies address the first objective of increasing financial capacity. These are critical because the economic development program may be seen by the county as a luxury in times of budget tightness. The cities have limited ability to support FEAC, and more revenue streams are needed. Community economic development takes time, especially to grow from within. If one or more new sources of revenue can be dedicated to economic development, it is more able to survive long enough to see results from its actions.

Community economic development requires people to be able to work effectively in volunteer groups. The dynamics of leading groups are very different from those in business or even family, where position comes with authority to make decisions and direct the actions of others. Groups of community volunteers must together understand the issues and agree with the proposed actions. Tasks can only be accepted by volunteers. There are established techniques that are effective for building community participation and implementing community projects, but these skills must be learned.

20 Clues to Community Survival

1. **Evidence of Community Pride** : Successful communities are often showcases of care, attention, history, and heritage.
2. **Emphasis on Quality in Business and Community Life** : People believe that something worth doing is worth doing right.
3. **Willingness to Invest in the Future** : In addition to the brick-and-mortar investments, all decisions are made with an outlook on the future.
4. **Participatory Approach to Community Decision Making** : Even the most powerful of opinion leaders seem to work toward building consensus.
5. **Cooperative Community Spirit** : The stress is on working together toward a common goal and the focus is on positive results.
6. **Realistic Appraisal of Future Opportunities** : Successful communities have learned on to build on strengths and minimize weaknesses.
7. **Awareness of Competitive Positioning** : Local loyalty is emphasized, but thriving communities know who their competitors are and position themselves accordingly.
8. **Knowledge of the Physical Environment** : Relative location and available natural resources underscore decision-making.
9. **Active Economic Development Program** : There is an organized, public/private approach to economic development.
10. **Deliberate Transition of Power to a Younger Generation of Leaders** : People under 40 regularly hold key positions in civic and business affairs.
11. **Celebration of Diversity in Leadership** : Women, young people, and newcomers are elected officials, plant managers, and entrepreneurial developers.
12. **Strong Belief in and Support for Education** : Good schools are the norm and centers of community activity.
13. **Problem-Solving Approach to Providing Health Care** : Health care is considered essential, and smart strategies are in place for diverse methods of delivery.
14. **Strong Multi-Generational Family Orientation** : The definition of family is broad, and activities include younger as well as older generations.
15. **Strong Presence of Traditional Institutions that are Integral to Community Life** : Churches, schools and service clubs are strong influences on community development and social activities.
16. **Sound and Well-Maintained Infrastructure** : Leaders work hard to maintain and improve streets, sidewalks, water systems, and sewage facilities.
17. **Careful use of Fiscal Resources** : Frugality is a way of life and expenditures are considered investments in the future.
18. **Sophisticated Use of Technology Resources** : Leaders access information that is beyond the knowledge base available in the community.
19. **Willingness to Seek Help from the Outside** : People seek outside help for community needs, and many compete for government grants and contracts for economic and social programs.
20. **Conviction that, in the Long Run, You Have to Do It Yourself** : Thriving rural communities believe their destiny is in their own hands. Making their communities good places is a pro-active assignment, and they willingly accept it.

A Healthy Organization...

- 👍 Has an understandable mission statement and lives by it
- 👍 Develops clear, achievable goals
- 👍 Adopts a process for reviewing goals
- 👍 Agrees on how decisions are made
- 👍 Has written goals, roles, and responsibilities for committees
- 👍 Engages in on-going planning
- 👍 Elicits support from the membership
- 👍 Has a system for recruiting new members
- 👍 Provides leadership development opportunities
- 👍 Reinforces teamwork and participation
- 👍 Communicates with members regularly
- 👍 Monitors progress
- 👍 Celebrates success

Source: Idaho Rural Partnership, 1994

Catalytic Leadership

Jeff Luke, in his seminal book *Catalytic Leadership: Strategies for an interconnected World*, describes four important leadership roles that need to be performed by someone in a group to get most any community betterment project accomplished:

Catalytic Leadership Roles and Tasks

1. **Issue Advocate** – This role focuses attention on the issue; it gets the issue on the agenda of key stakeholder groups within and outside the community. People playing this role are passionate salespeople who create a sense of urgency around the issue. They make people uncomfortable about the problem and generate a sense of strategic opportunity. The issue advocate must gain the support of the public, local government officials, and business leaders.
2. **Convener** – Convene and organize action teams to address the issue, strategy, or project. This role involves doing stakeholder analysis and inviting the parties to come together to talk about the issue. Care must be taken to maintain neutrality in the case of controversial issues to make the convening a safe place to voice concerns. This also helps create legitimacy about the group’s standing to address an issue.
3. **Facilitator/Negotiator** – This role is about the task of gaining agreement on the response and action steps to address the issue. It involves being a transparent facilitator, but it also involves gathering the pros and cons of an issue together for analysis. It involves raising the legalities, economics, and process issues involved in completing the response to an issue.
4. **Implementation champion** – This role is about sustaining action and momentum during implementation. It requires focus on the action steps, delegation of tasks, and celebration of progress. It requires persistence and determination and good volunteer management. It also requires a willingness to examine the results and work on continuous improvement.

It is important to note that the same person often is not able or inclined to be the leader in each role. Research has found that people of differing Myers-Briggs personality types tend to gravitate toward one or two of these roles. In the last year we have seen the Issue Advocate role be played to the opportunity created by the bridge closure to generate sand dunes business in St Anthony. There has been strong advocating for a particular solution to the retail leakage problem as well, in the case of the community store. Convening has perhaps had mixed success. The proliferation of groups concerned with growth in Fremont County is evidence that in some issues people feel excluded from certain convenings, and thus form their own groups for the conversation they desire. Similarly, there is room for improvement in the Facilitator/Negotiator role in Fremont County economic development work. When questions or concerns raised about a project are shunted aside and not analyzed in an open setting, the result may be for a group to land on an action that will prove infeasible or less than optimal. The county has many Implementation Champions as evidenced by the many projects and events that are completed each year.

The reader will observe that many of the action steps suggested in the action strategies in this plan follow the four tasks and roles of catalytic leadership. Further training around the skills required for each of these roles will help community projects flow to completion.

Organizational Capacity – To expand the ability of public and non-profit organizations to get things done to the betterment of Fremont County.

- 1) To increase the financial capacity of community organizations.
- 2) To expand the pool of community leaders and to sharpen their skills in leading and managing group projects

Action Strategies:

- OC1. Low-Head Hydropower Turbine in St Anthony
- OC2. Assume management of St. Anthony Sand Dunes and issue ATV dune use permit
- OC3. Community Endowment
- OC4. Develop RV park at Fremont County golf course
- OC5. Implement a resort tax within the Island Park caldera
- OC6. Implement leadership training series, or class, for Fremont County
- OC7. Expand and re-structure FEAC
- OC8. Increase accountability with action strategy approval and reporting system.

Action Strategy

Goal: OC = Organizational Capacity
Strategy OC1 Low-Head Hydropower Turbine in St Anthony
<p>Background/Concept:</p> <p>Rocky Mountain Power has not generated electricity from the St. Anthony diversion for three years, since the turbine shaft failed. The utility has a FERC license to operate this facility. The turbine has a 500kw nameplate rating and runs with a high load factor. The FERC license requires that certain things are done to mitigate environmental issues, e.g. ditches are patrolled to rescue stranded fish when irrigation ditch diversions halt in the fall. In addition the diversion canal is owned by the Egin Bench Canal Company. The utility would need to rebuild about 120 feet of wooden flume before re-operating the turbine. Replacing the trash rack with new plastic ones may help with frazil ice problems. The idea is for Fremont County to obtain title from the utility, finance the re-development of the facility, and contract to sell the power locally. This would make use of a rare renewable energy source, and provide cash flow to finance other community development projects for years to come.</p> <p>Here's a rough idea of the economics: A 500kw turbine operating 75% of the time at full capacity would generate (500kw x 8,760 hr/yr x 75%) 3,251,250 kwh, The current Idaho Public Utilities Commission rate for PURPA Qualified Facilities (which this turbine is) is 6.274 cents/kwh. This generates \$203,100 per year. One could sell the green tags for this renewable energy to an interested buyer for about one-half cent per kwh, generating another \$16,250. Thus. There is roughly \$219,450 of cash flow each year to cover loan repayment on a facility improvement loan. At 4.5%, this could provide payments on a loan as high as \$4.5 million. If grants can be obtained to cover part of the facility improvement, so much the better. It may also be possible to increase power generation with newer technology turbines. In any case, the county would end up with a valuable resource generating cash flow to finance other economic development projects or programs.</p>
<p>Potential Partners:</p> <p>Fremont County – may have the best standing to apply. It has an engineer on staff who could help develop the proposal and oversee the projects construction and operation. The utility has an interest in building a working relationship with the county, as it has other activities in the county.</p> <p>USDA-RD – Hydropower does not qualify under Sect. 9006 Rural Energy Guaranteed Loans, but under its Community Facility program, it may be eligible for low interest loans or partial grants.</p> <p>Idaho Department of Water Resources and US Dept of Energy has a Clean Renewable Energy Bond program that offers financing to sustainable energy projects like this.</p> <p>Rocky Mountain Power Blue Skies Program – The utility occasionally makes grants to entities within its service area that are working on sustainable energy projects. Grants up to \$50,000 are available on a competitive granting basis. This project would be eligible.</p> <p>The Development Company (ECIPDA), could potentially arrange financing through its revolving loan fund or elsewhere.</p>

<p>Fall River Electric Cooperative could be a potential partner or buyer of the power depending on Rocky Mountain's preferences.</p>	
<p>Potential Resources: Roger Raeburn is the Rocky Mountain Power engineer (503.813.6667, Roger.Raeburn@Pacifcorp.com) who is reviewing the St. Anthony turbine. He has made his analysis and has forwarded it to the corporate decisionmakers. If they agree to dispose of the unit (as I believe he has recommended), then Rocky Mountain Power would entertain proposals for others to acquire it. If the County signs a confidentiality agreement, they would share their data on the turbine, its generating history, and the FERC licensing agreements. Egin Bench Canal Co. may also be interested.</p>	
<p>Concerns:</p>	
<p>Ranking Score</p>	
<p>Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem?</i> i.e. size of community reward) Score 1-10</p>	<p>5</p>
<p>Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed?</i> i.e. probability of success) Score 1-10</p>	<p>6</p>
<p>Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)</p>	<p>4</p>
<p>Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness</p>	<p>120</p>
<p>Action Steps</p>	
<p>a. Push roger Raeburn and Rocky Mt Power for a decision, and keep articulating the County's interest in the project.</p>	<p>On-going</p>
<p>b. If a go, Marla Vik can contract with an appropriate engineer to analyze turbine replacement and project costs</p>	<p>Not Done</p>
<p>c. Assuming feasibility, build ownership, management, and marketing partnerships with USDA-RD, IDWR, Fall River Electric, etc</p>	<p>Not Done</p>
<p>d.</p>	<p>Not Done</p>
<p>e.</p>	<p>Not Done</p>

Action Strategy

Goal: OC = Organizational Capacity	
Strategy OC2 County Management of St. Anthony Sand Dunes	
<p>Background/Concept: BLM has been finding that management of the sand dunes is a resource-intensive enterprise, in the face of the growth in visitors in the last decade. Though it has invested some \$2 million into its campground, the agency is open to finding another party to assume management. One option is for them to issue a competitive RFP, but they also have the ability to enter into an intergovernmental agreement. BLM already has shared cost agreements with the County on Sherriff's patrols and ambulance service. Because it is a Wilderness Study Area, they cannot turn the area over to the county with a Recreation & Public Purpose lease. BLM would be inclined to transfer to the County if it understands the costs that are associated with the Sand Dunes from the County's standpoint. The County could choose to manage directly or to find a private partner. Even with county management, the county has more flexibility to bring in other private concessionaires to the Dunes in order to capture more economic spending locally. If the county assumed management, it could also impose a county sand dunes use fee with short-term and annual permits affixed to vehicles. The revenues could then be split with BLM and used by the county to pay for law enforcement, emergency services, and development of associated services to the dunes users, e.g. constructing a permanent trail from the dunes to Parker and St Anthony, or marketing of the dunes.</p>	
<p>Potential Partners: Commissioner Skip Hurt has been the lead on this action strategy. He has been in communication with the Idaho Congressional delegation and top BLM officials. Secretary of Interior Dirk Kempthorne could be a valuable ally in the last year of the Bush Administration.</p>	
Potential Resources:	
<p>Concerns: BLM will want a revenue sharing agreement that offers some benefit to their agency and chance to recover their costs associated with the dunes. It will take several FTE's to manage the dune permit system, increase enforcement, and manage the campground and other programs. The Wilderness Study Area designation may be an obstacle that will require a Congressional fix.</p>	
Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem?</i> i.e. size of community reward) Score 1-10	8
Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed?</i> i.e. probability of success) Score 1-10	7
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	4
Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	224
Action Steps	
a. Assemble the case for County management by reviewing the costs incurred by the county presently, together with estimates of	Not Done

the cost of managing the dunes to a high standard, and the potential revenue stream of proposed fees.	
b. Meet with BLM officials to negotiate terms of a management agreement. Try to separate revenue sharing from campground management from county tag revenue.	On-going
c. Work with Congressional delegation and Secretary of Interior to assess options like removing WSA status, R&PP lease, Nat'l Rec Area, etc, and to keep pressure on BLM to come to terms	On-Going
d.	Not Done
e.	Not Done

Action Strategy

Goal: OC = Organizational Capacity
Strategy OC3 Community Endowment Fund
<p>Background/Concept: America is facing the largest transfer of wealth between generations in the history of civilization. Over the next 50 years, the RUPRI center for Rural Entrepreneurship estimates the transfer will amount to \$53 trillion, or an average of \$477,000 for every household in the US! Even a small county like Fremont is likely to have hundreds of millions of dollars changing hands in coming decades. Much of this wealth was earned in Fremont County. Still more is held by new or part-year residents who may still have a loyalty to Fremont, and even non-residents who grew up here may want to leave a remembrance gift.</p> <p>If a credible holding vessel can be created and a pitch made to give back to Fremont County, it is possible to build a significant endowment over time. A single "Fremont Fund" would be simplest, but funds could be created for each community such as the "Island Park Caldera Community Fund." It is even possible that some donors may want to dedicate a fund to a community center, library, or Fremont Schools. The point is that people who give tens of hundreds of dollars to community betterment causes every year may be able to give thousands or more in their estate. There are many examples of very small towns having a retired teacher or childless couple leave hundreds of thousands to community endowments. Vicksburg, Michigan is a town of 2,500 with a Vicksburg Fund exceeding \$6 million held by the Kalamazoo Community Foundation, but managed by a committee of leading citizens.</p> <p>This is a long range strategy that may take decades to reach multi-million dollar size, but it creates local capacity to address all sorts of community needs and to strategically invest in increasing community vitality. It is important to structure the Fund Committee to cover the entire region and both public and private sectors. For instance it may contain 3 mayors, a county commissioner, a banker, health professional, and educator. This helps convince potential donors that the funds will reach top priorities that would otherwise go unfunded. Remember that until the endowment vehicle is created, you will never know the true potential of this option.</p>
<p>Potential Partners: Idaho Community Foundation, 208-342-3535 - can manage a directed fund with a minimum starting investment of \$25,000, charging a small fee and making grants as directed by the managing committee. Chambers and Gem Teams can help get the word out. Local bankers, lawyers, accountants, and financial planners are key allies in helping couples be aware of giving options. Civic clubs are a great partner who may be willing to take this project on.</p>
<p>Potential Resources: Hometown Competitiveness is a program that has a workshop on just this topic of organizing community efforts to build philanthropic capacity.</p>
<p>Concerns: The potential exists for this strategy to break down into turf fights over who controls the funds. It is important to keep in mind the perspective of an elderly couple contemplating giving options and the emotional debt they owe to the community that they were part of.</p>

Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem? i.e. size of community reward</i>) Score 1-10	7
Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed? i.e. probability of success</i>) Score 1-10	6
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	2
Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	84
Action Steps	
a. Talk this option up at local meetings and ascertain the level of interest. Local public officials should use their position to talk about this strategy.	Not Done
b. Contact the Idaho Community Foundation and any other potential fiscal managers to understand the exact requirements of establishing a fund.	Not Done
c. Form a planned giving committee and divide the tasks of marketing and education and the actual "ask" group. Develop a brochure on planned giving options and distribute. Consider mailing to Fremont schools alumni nearing retirement age.	Not Done
d. Ideally, locate one or several donors who can immediately donate a total of \$25,000 to create the Fremont Fund endowment. This makes for a more exciting announcement, as the fund is then established an further gifts can be in any amount.	Not Done
e. Celebrate both gifts and expectancies (planned gifts established in someone's will)	Not Done

Action Strategy

Goal: OC = Organizational Capacity	
Strategy OC4 Develop an RV park at the Fremont County Golf Course	
<p>Background/Concept: Fremont County owns a golf course located outside of St Anthony, which has 9 holes with room for 18 holes. There is land available on that site which could be used to construct an RV camping park. Given the demand for RV parking in the summer, that national RV sales were the highest in 30 years in 2007, the popularity of golf, the presence of the large stream of pass-through visitors in the summer heading to Yellowstone Park, and the potential that some dune users may also like to golf or to camp in someplace green, it is very likely that such an RV park would see heavy use in the summer, and not compete with other RV facilities in the area. There are 3 other benefits to this idea: 1) The county may be able to get funding assistance to construct the facility. 2) RV campers mean more golfers which will make the economics of the golf course tip toward the profitable. It may even lead to justifying an expansion to 18 holes, thus benefiting existing Fremont residents., and 3) The county may be able to generate a profit from the campground, especially if they can leverage capital costs with grant dollars. These funds could be used to support other recreation programs or the economic development program.</p> <p>The RV park will require both water and septic services. An expanded drain field to service the campground is a likely requirement. Other costs include landscaping with trees at every site, picnic tables, fire rings, shaded awnings at some sites, and electrical service.</p>	
<p>Potential Partners: Tamara C, the county Parks & Rec coordinator should take the lead on this project. It will require some grantwriting for park development. It will also require work with Jeff Patlovich's Planning Department. Marla Vik may be able to help assess electric, water and septic needs.</p>	
<p>Potential Resources: Idaho Parks & Recreation Recreational Vehicles Fund offers about \$3.4 million in grants each year. These could be used to add RV camping capacity to the golf course and South Fremont County area. A P&R staff member thought this project could score quite well for funding. this same program helped fund improvements at the Egin Lakes campground. It may be possible to get community and corporate donations. Grant research would be needed The High Country RC&D may be an asset for doing the landscape architecture design of the RV park. RC&Ds are able to engage the services of NRCS specialists. The Eastern Idaho Entrepreneurial Center may be able to assign a student intern to research and business analysis of this idea.</p>	
<p>Concerns: Private RV park operators may raise questions, but competition should not be an issue in high season. In fact, having more facilities available may make travelers more likely to look for a stopping place in south Fremont County.</p>	
Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem? i.e. size of community reward</i>) Score 1-10	5

Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed?</i> i.e. probability of success) Score 1-10	8
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	3
Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	120
Action Steps	
a. Investigate the site and estimate costs for water, septic & drainfield, and electric service. Look for ways the county could use equipment, labor and materials as in-kind contribution. Consider using a BYU student intern to do legwork on assembling analysis.	Not Done
b. Work with Steven Smart to get a NRCS to design the RV park	Not Done
c. Develop an application for ID Parks & Rec funding. This will require a design, cost estimates, budget, and estimated usage	Not Done
d. Conduct grant research to identify other sources of foundation and corporate donations.	Not Done
e. Construct the RV park.	Not Done

Action Strategy

Goal: OC = Organizational Capacity
Strategy OC5 Encourage establishment of a resort tax in Island Park
<p>Background/Concept: Under Idaho statute (50:1046) a city may choose to establish a resort tax on lodging accommodations, alcohol sales by-the-drink, and other designated sales, with the approval of 60% of voters. A resort city must be less than 10,000 population and "derives the major portion of its economic well-being from businesses catering to recreational needs and meeting needs of people traveling to that destination city for an extended period of time." Cities such as Sun Valley, Driggs, and even Riggins have passed resort tax measures. Riggins has dedicated its first ten years of revenues toward a major sewer system improvement needed to maintain its tourism industry; it expects to get \$60,000/year initially from a lodging-only tax. The ordinance presented to voters must "(a) state and define the specific tax to be approved; (b) state the exact rate of the tax to be assessed; (c) state the exact purpose or purposes for which the revenues derived from the tax shall be used; and (d) state the duration of the tax." 50:1047 Thus, Island Park needs to develop a plan that estimates the amount of revenue and describes the purposes to which such revenues may be applied toward.</p> <p>Fremont County had \$5.38 million in lodging sales in 2006. A two percent lodging tax on that yields \$107,600, though only a fraction of the sales were in Island Park.</p> <p>This could be an important vehicle to address key infrastructure needs such as sewer and solid waste system improvements, a community center, public restrooms, seasonal worker housing, and the like. It provides an opportunity for visitors to the area to support the costs of facilities that support their visit. If the single purpose is a community center, it may be possible to pursue an auditorium district instead of resort tax, which offers the advantage of flexible district boundaries. Note also that the resort tax option could separately be pursued by Ashton, and perhaps even St Anthony could make a case with the sand dunes and pass-through visitors.</p>
<p>Potential Partners: The City of Island Park is the entity that needs to take the lead on this strategy. the County can only play a supporting role in conducting the analysis, interviewing stakeholders, holding public meetings, and the like. The county does have a stake in this strategy in that it operates two sewer systems and a solid waste dump within Island Park, and would be an active user of a community center meeting facility, not to mention benefitting from improvements that increase tourism activity within the county. Association of Idaho Cities can be a source of information. Idaho Tax Commission will be a partner as the entity that collects the tax and disburses revenues.</p>
<p>Potential Resources: A BYU student intern may be able to help develop the plan and analysis.</p>
<p>Concerns: The resort tax would only be assessed on establishments within the City of Island Park. This contains many but not all of the lodging and dining establishments in the caldera, which may raise issues of fairness.</p>

Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem? i.e. size of community reward</i>) Score 1-10	6
Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed? i.e. probability of success</i>) Score 1-10	7
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	3
Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	126
Action Steps	
a. County commissioners talk with Island Park mayor/city council about the concept and whether the time is right to pursue it.	Not Done
b. Test support for the concept with confidential interviews with lodging property owners/managers (and dining/drinking establishments if that is included in scope.) Questions should focus on causes/projects that would be supported and the scope and size of the tax.	Not Done
c. Determine the list of businesses whose sales would be taxed - motels, lodges, vacation home rentals, bars, resturants, etc. and estimate the gross sales receipts and thus the tax yield.	Not Done
d. Develop a written plan that meets the legal requirements and draft a corresponding ordinance for voter approval.	Not Done
e. Schedule the election and conduct public meetings and marketing campaign to ensure passage	Not Done
f. Certify results and begin collecting tax	Not Done
g.	Not Done
h.	Not Done

Action Strategy

Goal: OC = Organizational Capacity	
Strategy OC6 Leadership Training	
<p>Background/Concept: In rural areas, it is rare to have community organizations with enough resources to have professional staff. Many community services and community improvements get accomplished by volunteers and organizations led by volunteers. Working with volunteers and leading community organizations requires a different set of skills than when one has the authority to make sole decisions and delegate to employees. Skills around communication, conflict management, meeting facilitation, grant administration, project management, volunteer management, network management, partnership-building are critical for success, but must be learned somewhere. Building a broad group of skilled community leaders will help all kinds of county projects flow more smoothly. The Idaho Rural Partnership has recognized leadership training as a top priority since its inception in 1992. The RBOG grant to Fremont County provided for some leadership training to be delivered through BYU-Idaho. During the course of compiling this plan, it has become clear that the people of Fremont County often have problems discussing differences with respect and openness and staying with a difficult conversation long enough to find common ground to move forward. This is further evidence of the importance of skill-building opportunities for local residents.</p>	
<p>Potential Partners: BYU-Idaho Dr. Fenton Broadhead</p>	
<p>Potential Resources: remaining RBOG grant funds</p>	
<p>Concerns: Attendance at recent training workshops has been scarce. Gaining attendance at leadership trainings will require some effort and planning. One approach might be to recruit a leadership class who each committ to coming to a series of trainings, on Saturdays, one week night per month for several months, etc at a location like the community center in Ashton. Several cities and/or Chambers of Commerce in Idaho conduct such a leadership training annually, and raise funds to support the classes. Weeknight trainings assemble people at a time of day when energy and attention are limited. Half-day or day trainings offer much better experiences for learning and bonding with classmates. Remember that an important side purpose is building stronger relationships within the community. Longer trainings also make it easier to bring in outside trainers. There may be some resistance to leadership training as being too "touchy-feely." This attitude comes from cetain personality types, perhaps a quarter of the population, who focus on the task aspects of projects to the exclusion of the relationship and process components. All personality types are needed for successful project completion, just as all perspectives on an issue are needed, together with a way to sort through the views and find common ground.</p>	
Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem?</i> i.e. size of community reward) Score 1-10	7
Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed?</i> i.e. probability of success) Score 1-10	7
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	2

Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	98
Action Steps	
a. Talk among commissioners, mayors, county managers, civic and chamber leaders about the need for leadership training. Come to agreement on the structure of workshop offerings, the topics to be covered, workshop location and dates, budget and fees if any, and trainers.	Not Done
b. Assign a person to be the lead organizer. Arrange logistics and develop fliers	Not Done
c. Recruit individuals and couples, key agency managers, to commit to attend.	Not Done
d. Make a special effort to recruit young people, Hispanic residents, members of community organization boards, and people who do not see themselves as leaders	Not Done
e. Build a set of ground rules by which participants agree to behave at the first session and post at subsequent trainings.	Not Done
f. Build food and a chance to socialize into each training.	Not Done
g. Celebrate success and recognize the graduates of the leadership program.	Not Done

Action Strategy

Goal: OC = Organizational Capacity
Strategy OC7 Re-structure Fremont Economic Action Commission
<p>Background/Concept: FEAC is a county-sponsored organization that has been operating in various forms for some seventeen years. It has been led by the same Chairperson, Susan Baker, throughout its history, and was for a time aligned with Clark County for purposes of sharing a staff person. Its Board is currently composed of 7 members, a representative of Island park, Ashton, St Anthony, Newdale, Teton, and Parker, each of which is currently the mayor, plus a representative appointed by the county commission. the corporation is advisory to the Fremont County Commission. It advises, but does not manage, the Fremont County economic development specialist.</p> <p>In the past, the organization has had some problems communicating its purpose, and has rarely moved beyond information sharing into action. Much of meeting time is spent sharing information about activities within each community. There has been some unhappiness over the way dues are assessed, which may have to do with the organization's purpose and work plan not being clearly expressed, nor a budget showing why money was being raised and how it will be spent. The value of FEAC has not been clear to members of the public. In fact, the mayors of St. Anthony, Ashton, and Island park hold separate monthly luncheons to share information. FEAC has had difficulty gathering a quorum at some meetings in the last year. Meanwhile, the three chambers of commerce have found a way to work together as a tri-chamber, and at least two other organizations have been formed to work on sustainability issues. Duplicative visioning and other meetings have occurred regularly.</p> <p>A single county-wide organization formed to address economic and community development issues can have a lot of value in Fremont County. However, FEAC is not functioning effectively and needs to be re-organized. A reading of the 20 Clues to Community Survival shows that two clues are a "deliberate transition of power to a younger generation of leaders" and to "celebrate diversity in leadership" by including young people, women, and newcomers in leadership positions. Susan Baker should be recognized and honored for the long contributions she has made to the community, but it is time for new leadership opportunities to be presented to her and to establish a new pattern of regular succession to the leadership of FEAC.</p> <p>The IRP Healthy Organization checklist also presents a way to check the health of FEAC. The mission of FEAC is not clear, but it appears to be viewed very narrowly as a place for information-sharing and coordination. Fremont County needs a broad and inclusive economic development organization that can foster more intensive form of cooperation, partnership and collaboration. This can only come from an organization that has a much broader membership, that is run with openness, clarity, and professionalism, and whose meetings are structured to allow time for creative brainstorming on issues of mutual concern and consensus decisions to act together. FEAC needs to allow all the interested stakeholders in Fremont County's development to come together to use their collective wisdom and resources to get things done. Here are a few suggested changes: Board Structure- It may be OK to keep the same seven members for purposes of financial governance, but FEAC needs another level of membership where the three chambers, Gem</p>

Teams, school district, Forest Service, BLM, USDA RD, ITD, ID Parks & Rec, Fremont Growth Solutions, and other community organizations can all participate and feel valued. IRP operated with a Board of 26 members and compensated by lowering quorum requirements to ten to allow for scheduling conflicts. FEAC needs to reach out to unrepresented portions of the community such as youth and Hispanics with a sincere effort to gain their participation. FEAC officers should be expected to rotate regularly. Changes in leadership help keep an organization fresh. Inclusion and openness - prevents the frustration that erupts as newly-formed organizations, discontent with political leadership, and petitions for change. If people have a place at the table and are treated with respect, they will be willing to contribute to community projects they understand and have had a part in creating. FEAC can be an umbrella organization that captures all ideas, monitors progress on all projects, and uses its collective power to keep community betterment efforts moving forward.

Committees - With a larger organization, it may be necessary to use a committee structure to make more efficient use of time and keep projects moving. The goal areas of this report offer one way to structure groups, or they may be ad hoc project groups operate independently and report progress and obstacles at FEAC meetings.

Organizational Clarity - The relationship between FEAC and the County should be clear and in writing. Similarly, the relationship between the ED specialist and FEAC. While FEAC may not have daily oversight or hiring/firing ability, it should have the ability to advise the Commission in personnel matters and it should be encouraged to direct the work plan of the ED specialist. The ED specialist should understand that FEAC's success is a direct reflection on their performance. There should be little or no difference between the annual report of the ED specialist and FEAC. Ideally, it should be FEAC, together with the ED specialist, who take the lead in managing the implementation of this ED strategy. The County economic development budget or at least the discretionary project account should be part of FEAC's oversight. FEAC needs some real power and ownership to justify city support and contributions toward FEAC, and to allow FEAC to solicit private sector support and apply for grants.

Meeting operation - FEAC should be all about building consensus for action. Robert's Rules of Order are only needed where formal motions occur or finances are involved. A less formal culture will help increase creativity and fun. Remember that people need to want to be involved in volunteer organizations. Less formal meetings can still be carefully planned to make effective use of time and incorporate a variety of techniques to poll members, generate ideas, surface interests, and come to decisions.

Fiscal Management - Many rural places find they have numerous economic development players, all of which struggle financially as organizations. It is worth considering a consolidation of those organizations. For instance, in Valley County, Nebraska, leaders combined the chamber, county economic development, city, and another ED group to form a single organization with enough budget to run a consolidated program called Hometown Competitiveness. Three chambers, two growth management groups, and FEAC may be too great an administrative burden for county residents to support.

Potential Partners:

Cities, three Chambers of Commerce

Potential Resources:

INDC, The Idaho Non-Profit Development Center, can help provide facilitators for Board retreats. They also have an organizational assessment tool that is a useful way to analyze an organization's health. www.idahononprofits.org

Concerns:

Some will say that small, tightly-run boards are the best way to get things done. While there is some truth to this, economic development is a messy topic that spills out across many geographic areas, economic sectors, and governmental authorities. If people can be brought

together, and their time structured to pull out their best, then progress will begin to flow from FEAC. Problems with attendance, reputation, and even budget will diminish. "By your works you shall be known."	
Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem? i.e. size of community reward</i>) Score 1-10	4
Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed? i.e. probability of success</i>) Score 1-10	8
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	2
Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	64
Action Steps	
a. Pull together the expanded FEAC planning committee in a retreat setting to debate the various aspects of the organization and develop a process for reform.	Not Done
b.	Not Done
c.	Not Done
d.	Not Done
e.	Not Done
f.	Not Done
g.	Not Done

Action Strategy

Goal: OC = Organizational Capacity	
Strategy OC8 Increased Accountability	
<p>Background/Concept: The Fremont County economic development specialist position is a difficult job. There are so many stakeholders in economic development who wish to have a say in the county program. Besides reporting to the county commission and FEAC, the Idaho Department of Commerce feels it has a major stake in this position by virtue of its cost-sharing grant. New events have a way of disrupting daily work and providing distractions. Despite the many players, position is largely running a one-person shop with limited daily oversight.</p> <p>Some controversy has occurred in the last year over activities that were not known or the manner in which these activities occurred, and especially over the amount of time invested in certain tasks. a few simple management tools may help keep the Ed specialist focused, and the commission and Board free of surprises. These are suggested from the management of the original Idaho Rural Partnership.</p>	
<p>Potential Partners: Commission, FEAC, ED specialist</p>	
<p>Potential Resources: IRP examples can be furnished upon request by Dr Gardner.</p>	
<p>Concerns: A concern by any professional is maintaining the balance between reporting paperwork and taking action. This system has been used by an executive director with much success for a decade. It provides clarity to the governing board and the funding stakeholders. the process of developing a written action strategy proposal sharpens thinking about logical steps, partners, resources, etc. The written proposal offers an opportunity for the commission and others to sharpen the idea and plan of action. The completed task report causes one to think about measurable outcomes and the report becomes the basis for writing an annual report later. Having a simple system like this may take a small amount of time, but it more than pays for itself in accountability to others and internal focus on projects likely to offer returns to the county's public interest.</p>	
Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem?</i> i.e. size of community reward) Score 1-10	5
Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed?</i> i.e. probability of success) Score 1-10	9
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	3
Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	135
Action Steps	
a. Review the new economic development plan and with the commissioners, select a limited number of the action strategies for approval onto the ED specialist works plan.	Not Done
b. Any existing projects not in the plan, or new action strategies which are developed, should be submitted to the Commission, or FEAC, in writing	Not Done

<p>using the template or a modification thereof. It should be made clear what goal each new strategy is directed toward, the exact nature of the ED specialist role and how much time will be required, any other resources required, and who the other partners will be on the action. Each new action strategy, or task, must be approved by the Commission (or FEAC depending on how lines of authority are established) before time is invested beyond a few exploratory hours. the Commission may place limits on the role or manner of activity on a given task.</p>	
<p>c. The ED specialist can then maintain a one page active task list that shows which action strategies are in play, the role the county ED specialist has, and the goals being addressed. Progress reports become a simple matter of reporting action on each active strategy, and any new developments that may lead to new tasks.</p>	<p>Not Done</p>
<p>d. Progress on the action strategies can also be maintained on the task template in this document. If an action strategy is deemed complete, or if no further action is warranted because the task is not feasible, or the lead has been assigned elsewhere, then the ED specialist can write up the action strategy as complete and submit that for approval by the Commission, thus removing the item from the active task list and from this document.</p>	<p>Not Done</p>
<p>e. An active task list might typically have 7-15 action strategies on it at any point in time, ideally with something addressing each goal area. the ED specialist can check their focus by asking which of the action strategies they have been working on today. If their actions are all in furtherance of something on the approved list, they are focused and on firm ground with the Commission.</p>	<p>Not Done</p>
<p>f.</p>	<p>Not Done</p>
<p>g.</p>	<p>Not Done</p>

Volunteers & Community Attitude

In rural communities, there are not enough resources or population to justify staff positions for many community organizations. Community services from fire departments to search and rescue, Meals-on Wheels social programs, libraries, visitor centers, community events, and all manner of community betterment projects depend on community volunteers to make them happen.

Community organizations who understand and appreciate volunteers, who work to appeal to their motivations, to be clear about the opportunities and provide opportunities to recognize outstanding work, will be rewarded with a steady flow of volunteers. Communities who treat their volunteers well and who look for ways to build social capital into the volunteer process, will become vital places with positive attitudes.

This goal intersects with the leadership training strategy in OC6, with re-structuring FEAC OC7, with the Main Street program CI1, with the Community Review CI2, with the Business Retentions and Expansion strategy ED2, Business mentoring ED3, and Business Networks ED4, and with Fremont Ambassadors AIM1.

Volunteers & Community Attitude - To get more people engaged in projects, programs & organizations that better their community and unify the county.

Action Strategies:

VCA1. FEAC and ED Program as a Model for Volunteerism

VCA2. County "Volunteer Week"

VCA3. Organize a Fremont County "Paint The Town" Event

Other Action Ideas:

- Use town hall meetings to allow people to become involved with community projects (part of VCA2?)
- Encourage interdenominational volunteerism
- Organize county "Familiarization Tours" for residents/new arrivals, employees of tourism – related businesses (part of VCA2?)
- Organize young retired folks (as mentors and volunteers) (VCA2?)
- Use the Idaho Community Review program to teach communities of St, Anthony and Island Park about their resources (CI2)
- Support a school community service requirement (X hours of community service/year) to build a volunteering spirit in young people

Action Strategy

Goal: VCA = Volunteers Community Attitude	
Strategy VCA1 FEAC & ED program As Model for Volunteerism	
Background/Concept: Perhaps the best way to encourage volunteerism is to model good practices in volunteerism. If FEAC wants to expand its membership and mission, and if the county ED program is to move toward managing a number of volunteer networks, then home is a good place to begin.	
Potential Partners: Numerous and growing	
Potential Resources: Idaho Cooperative Extension should have access to materials and trainers on this subject. IRP has conducted training in the past on this subject. Mary Lee Wood and Julie Numbers-Smith are former trainers on this subject.	
Concerns:	
Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem?</i> i.e. size of community reward) Score 1-10	
Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed?</i> i.e. probability of success) Score 1-10	
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	
Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	
Action Steps	
a. Recognize that FEAC and the county ED program rely heavily on volunteers. Efforts to bring clarity and transparency to volunteer opportunities will be rewarded.	Not Done
b. Organize one of the leadership trainings around recruiting and retaining volunteers. Market this training heavily to all community organizations.	Not Done
c. Modify the Ed web page and others to clearly list the committees and project teams that are currently active, and add a How to Join button to allow new people to become involved. Link new volunteers to the team leader by e-mail.	Not Done
d. Develop the habit of creating job descriptions for volunteer opportunities. Post these job descriptions in public places, on web sites, and in the local newspaper.	Not Done
e. Trust the talents of volunteers and delegate tasks to them with the expectation of completion. Be pleasantly surprised or help them understand how to improve their process. Become a positive volunteer coach.	Not Done
f.	Not Done
g.	Not Done

Action Strategy

Goal: VCA = Volunteers Community Attitude	
Strategy VCA2 County "Volunteer Week"	
<p>Background/Concept: Volunteers need to be recognized for their work and their accomplishments celebrated. One suggestion from the workshops was for the county to declare a Volunteer Week and to organize various groups into a week of activities, followed by a community celebration. This could take one of several forms. The Paint the Town strategy could become the focus of Volunteer Week. Or it could be scheduled in the spring as a Community Clean-up week with volunteers collecting weeds, trash, old cars, household and agricultural hazardous wastes, etc. Several communities have used this approach and worked with the local solid waste dump to allow free tipping of community trash on that weekend, and free pick-up of paints, chemicals, etc. It could be coupled with plantings and improvements to community entryways. It could even be connected to planting a community garden. A third option is simply to highlight all volunteer efforts that week, to work with community groups on improvement projects, and to hold a banquet or barbeque where volunteers are honored (and new volunteers recruited). Groups could have exhibits or poster displays with their successes, and man tables to recruit new volunteers. One of the major reasons for pursuing a Volunteer Week is to model community service as a value to the young people in the county. Schools should be involved early on. Activities should be constructed to be intergenerational and to connect people in new ways as they work together for the greater good. Volunteer Week can also be a good time to post volunteer job descriptions on the web and in the paper and to recruit new volunteers. It can be used in north Fremont County as a way to connect with part-year residents who may wish to volunteer (and many do!). Remember that boards of organizations that turn over leadership regularly can advertise their openings here.</p>	
<p>Potential Partners: County landfill Scouts Civic clubs Church groups and faith community Agencies like USFS, BLM, Parks & Rec, county rec all have volunteer programs and may be able to get involved.</p>	
Potential Resources:	
<p>Concerns: This will take effort, time, and VOLUNTEERS. However, most community groups are already doing something with volunteers and most will want to recognize them. This strategy is simple a vehicle to coordinate activities on the same week and weekend, and to hold a joint celebration where each organization can honor their volunteers in a community-wide setting.</p>	
Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem? i.e. size of community reward</i>) Score 1-10	4
Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed? i.e. probability of success</i>) Score 1-10	6
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	2

Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	48
Action Steps	
a. Send out a Survey Monkey electronic survey of all community organizations to assess their interest in this concept. Put out possibilities of what Volunteer Week could become, but let it evolve to where the group takes it.	Not Done
b. Host a meeting to share results and brainstorm whether this is something the group would like to pursue.	Not Done
c. Organize tasks and committees with action planning and begin the process.	Not Done
d.	Not Done
e.	Not Done
f.	Not Done
g.	Not Done

Action Strategy

Goal: VCA = Volunteers Community Attitude	
Strategy VCA3 Organize a Fremont County "Paint the Town" event	
<p>Background/Concept: Boise and other towns in Idaho have been doing "Paint the Town" community events for many years. Under this program, community teams of volunteers are organized to paint, repair, and generally "spruce up" the homes of elderly and disabled residents who lack the physical ability and funds to do it themselves. Typically, teams of volunteers adopt a property and assess the needs with the owner, then they do prep work prior to the big weekend, and then everyone does the painting on the same day, with a big celebration afterward. This program not only helps individual households, improves the appearance of the town and helps maintain the housing stock, but it serves as a way to build social capital by strengthening relationships in a spirit of altruistic camaraderie. If this program can be organized county-wide, with at least one team in each community, it acts as a small step toward building county unity in contrast to the historic feelings of rivalry.</p>	
<p>Potential Partners: The Eastern Idaho Community Action Partnership should be willing to take an active role in this project. they often will have a list of deserving candidates for home improvement from the Low Income Heating (LIHEAP) and Weatherization programs. The faith community should be active partners who can also suggest beneficiaries and field painting teams. Chamber of Commerce members often field teams of employees to help out. Paint manufactures, hardware stores, and/or large home improvement retailers will often donate paint and supplies or sell them at reduced cost.</p>	
<p>Potential Resources: Idaho Community Foundation is a prime candidate to make a small grant of \$1-5,000. Banks should be willing to contribute as well. Grocery stores and restaurants often contribute refreshments.</p>	
<p>Concerns: This is a project that could take up way too much time of an ED specialist. The county's role here would be to assist with the planning, fundraising, marketing, and organizing teams of county employees. A social services agency, civic club, or faith group should take the lead.</p>	
Ranking Score	
Plausibility (<i>To what degree will a success fix the problem?</i> i.e. size of community reward) Score 1-10	3
Feasibility (<i>Can we access the resources to succeed?</i> i.e. probability of success) Score 1-10	7
Community Readiness (Score 1-5; 1=Not Ready, 5= Very Ready)	3
Total Score = Plausibility x Feasibility x Community Readiness	63
Action Steps	
a. Assess interest among EICAP, faith community, civic clubs, and chambers. find an organization to take the lead.	Not Done
b. Talk to Boise Neighborhood Housing Services, 343-4065 about how they organized their program.	Not Done

c. Use the power of the group to find initial donors of paint and materials	Not Done
d. If a go, announce the program and dates publicly and circulate forms for paint teams to sign up with organizations and employers across the county. Organize the work in teams using a format that can be repeated next year.	Not Done
e. Work with social service providers and faith community to build a list of deserving households.	Not Done
f. Assign teams to homes, take before and after pictures, feed volunteers, and celebrate success.	Not Done
g.	Not Done

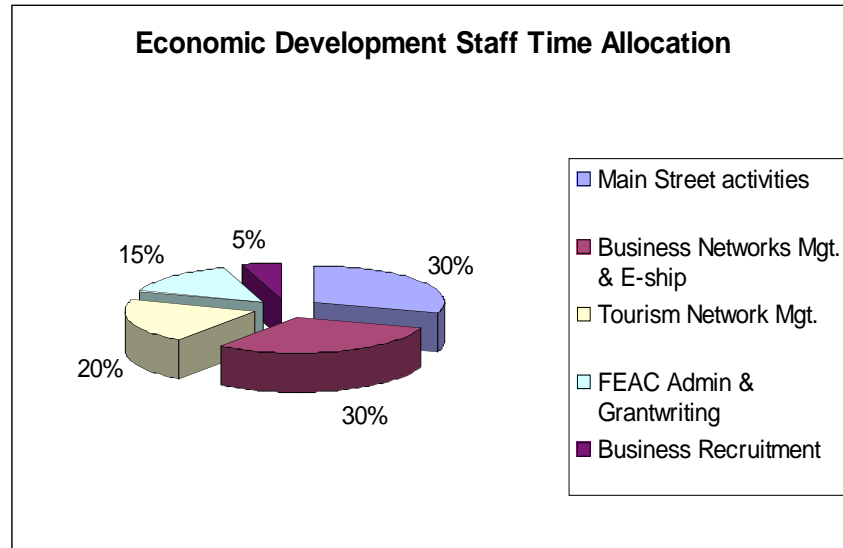
Summary

Fremont County is a region in the throes of change. Global trends and shifts in national values toward sustainability have been undercutting traditional natural resource industries for several decades and the pace of change seems to be increasing. Yet national population migration among both young and the aging Baby Boomers have strongly favored the Intermountain West, including Fremont County. Locally, the creation of BYU-Idaho has driven a strong development boom in the south county. People are demonstrating a preference for smaller towns through their willingness to commute long distances. And hidden among all the change is the steadily rising minority population of Hispanics.

And yet, Fremont County is also a land of riches. The people are resilient and well-adapted to the land. The land produces an abundance of products, tangible and intangible, consumable and renewable. There are numerous special places and abundant wildlife that lift the heart.

This economic development plan has been conceived through a process designed to educate community leaders about these forces of change, to engage them on the values they hold dear and their visions of a preferred future, and to sort through the many options to find this set of action strategies that build on the emerging trends and the local assets already available. This plan describes a future with a large number of residents who are there for the amenities of natural resources and small-town life. That is not unlike current residents, but with a heightened appreciation for sustainability of environment, economy, and community and with more diversity of background, race, religion, and education. The new residents will create demand for different goods and services than are available currently. By coordinating economic development efforts with county and city planning work, conflicts can be minimized and a higher standard of living gained for all.

One might ask what can a county possibly do to improve itself with such limited resources? Where do we begin among all these possible actions? The pie chart on the next page offers the authors suggestions for allocating time in a 1-2 person economic development office.



Main Street activities – Nearly a third of an FTE can be spent following the precepts of the National Main Street program. This holistic approach to downtown revitalization will lead to researching possibilities, building networks of downtown business owners, building a detailed property inventory. It could include organizing the leadership training, volunteer networks and events, and the farmer’s market.

Business Networks Mgt. &E-ship – This third of staff time should be spent organizing and conducting a Business Retention & Expansion program, learning the referral network for business services, organizing a Mentor program, and encouraging informal business networks for the sand dunes, artisans, and Hispanic business owners.

Tourism Network Mgt. – About twenty percent is dedicated to the tourism strategies. Building a network of people who conduct tours and activities for tourists and getting them to coordinate and jointly market is a high priority. Grant writing for promotional materials or tourism product development like the golf course RV park might come into play.

FEAC Admin & Grant writing – Some time needs to be allocated to maintain FEAC as an organization and tending both internal and external relationships. Grant writing and/or fundraising targeted to accomplishing action strategies is appropriate and can help justify the program. This time can also be used to update action strategies and present proposed changes in the plan to the commission.

Business Recruitment – The small amount reflects the author’s bias about the effectiveness of this activity. However, some real opportunities may present themselves, and state funding is dependent on being a partner in a statewide ED network.

This plan is intended to be a dynamic document. The commissioners and ED specialist will no doubt understand the details of certain strategies better than they are presented here. A few of the strategies will not prove feasible for one reason or another. The hope is that the ED specialist will ask permission to move certain of these strategies to active status and will modify and create others as time passes. Many of the strategies will take a long period of time to mature and show results. Because many are focused on small businesses and small, incremental changes, documenting the improvements may be difficult. However, patience and commitment will be rewarded. Change is coming into Fremont County, and with the principles outlined in this document and in the workshops underlying it, the change can be managed for the betterment of the residents of Fremont County.

