

Section One



Because we lead regional lives



An Introduction to the Teton View Regional Plan

The Teton View Regional Plan for Sustainable Development (Plan) has been designed to help city and county officials, and public land managers better coordinate their land-use planning, resource management, and community development efforts for the region's long-term benefit. The studies and tools developed during the planning process should help communities assess their current situation and effectively respond to changing socioeconomic and environmental conditions for years to come.

The Plan was written on a four-county, two-state scale because past studies have shown that our 83,000+ residents actually lead regional lives. Many live in one county, but commute daily to work in another. Rural residents tend to travel great distances to shop or visit medical facilities that are found in the region's larger cities. While there may be outstanding recreation choices in each community, most will travel across state and county lines for the best fishing or thrilling adventures far from home.

Results of the 4,000-person "Quality of Life" survey conducted for this Plan clearly show that people *choose* to live in Fremont, Madison, or Teton counties, Idaho, or Teton County, Wyoming. When averaged across the entire Teton View region:

- 79% of respondents choose to live here for the fresh air and clean water
- 79% cite the safe, small-town feel
- 77% cite the natural environment, wildlife and scenery
- 73% cite the many outdoor recreation opportunities
- 62% cite connections to their neighbors and community

Fifty percent or fewer of all survey respondents in all counties cited job opportunities and good quality services as reasons for living in the area.

Almost 50% of respondents in Fremont County cited the importance of family and farmland connections to the quality of their lives, but fewer than 20% of respondents in the other counties cited those connections. While affordable housing increases the quality of life for 51% of Fremont County respondents, affordable housing was cited by only 21% respondents in Teton County, Idaho, and only 4% in Teton County, Wyoming, where housing overall is less affordable.



These statistics proved useful in shaping the themes and strategies presented in sections 3 and 4 of this plan. The conclusions from the 20 research studies also contributed to the strategies and recommendations that are incorporated into 60 regional initiatives and community-scale projects proposed for implementation. As they are voluntarily pursued, these projects will help improve access to quality housing, well-paying jobs, healthy foods, outdoor recreation and public transportation, all while protecting the region’s natural resources and working landscapes. In summary, the Teton View Regional Plan provides a platform for improving the region’s livability and quality of life and building more inclusive and resilient communities on both sides of the Teton Range.

The Plan’s Guiding Documents

The Regional Plan features three companion documents for those localities seeking more specific guidance in pursuing equitable, sustainable development and building resilience into their economies and infrastructure:

- Model Development Code – Prepared especially for this region, the Model Code provides a menu of land-use concepts and development ordinances that a locality may choose to adopt to advance its sustainability goals and objectives.



- Greater Yellowstone Framework for Sustainable Development (GY-Framework) – This voluntary, ecosystem-based rating system was originally designed for private developments seeking a sustainability certification analogous to the LEED Green Building program. A version designed for local governments was developed under the HUD Grant with voluntary certification criteria that are cross-walked to the Model Development Code (see Section V)
- Regional Analysis of Impediments (RAI) – Fremont County was required by HUD to undertake “Fair Housing Planning” as a condition of receiving the grant and signed a certification that the Consortium would affirmatively further fair housing. This means that, under the grant, the Western Greater Yellowstone Consortium signatory members:
 - » Have conducted an analysis to identify impediments to fair housing choice
 - » Will plan appropriate actions to overcome the effects of any identified impediments
 - » Will maintain records reflecting the analysis and actions taken

Taken together, the plan and its 20 supportive studies and companion tools chart a realistic path towards economic and community sustainability across a changing social and environmental landscape. As they are implemented, the plan’s recommended strategies, initiatives and projects will help promote equity, fairness, and quality of life for current and future residents.



Navigating the Regional Plan

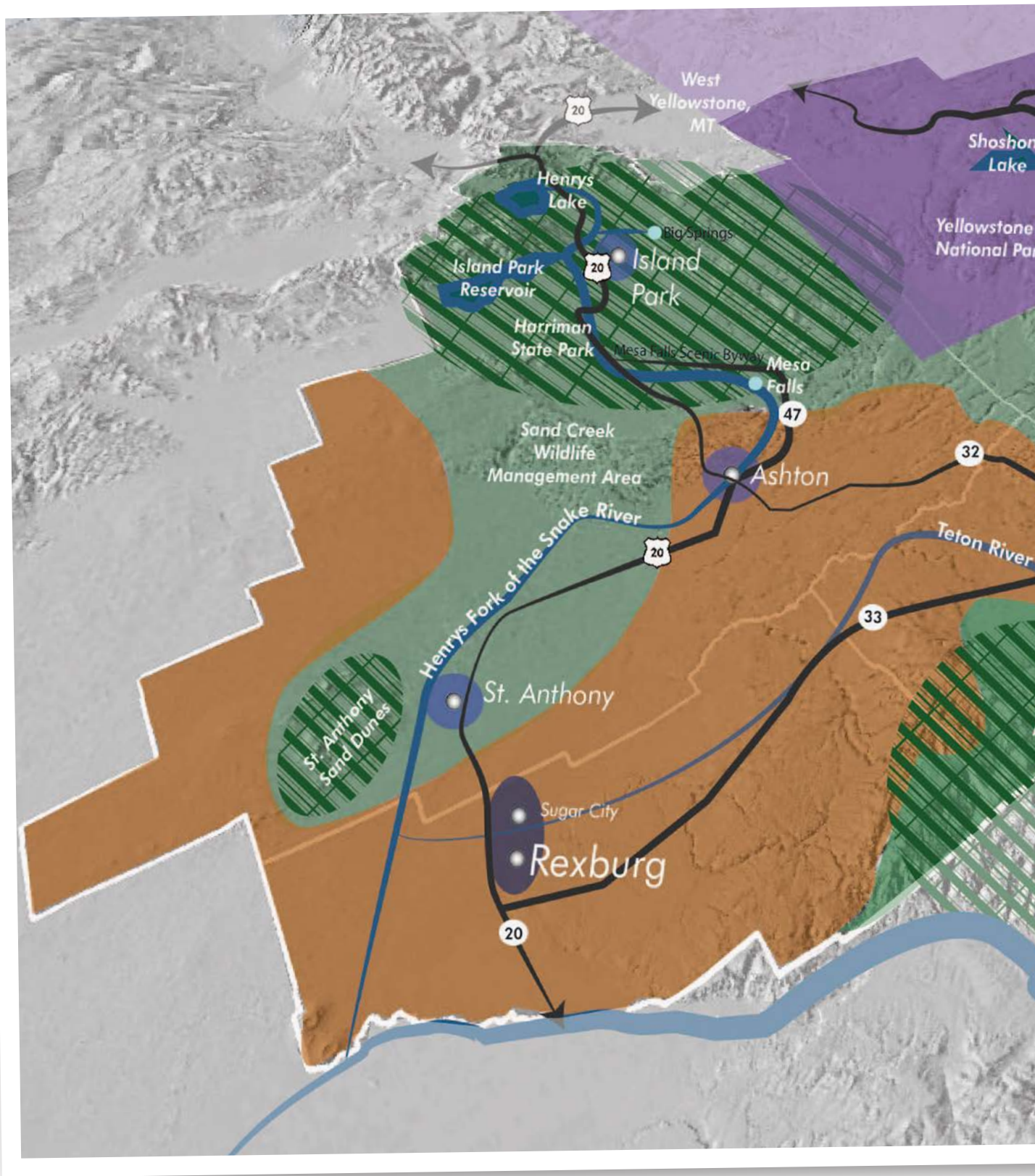
The Teton View Regional Plan for Sustainable Development (Plan) is presented in five sections, including this introductory section (Section I). Section II provides an overview of the region's explosive volcanic origins that continue to shape the landscape and the lives of its residents. Sections III and IV present the themes, strategies, and recommended projects that emerged from the 20 research studies supported by the HUD Grant and informed by existing city and county comprehensive plans. The themes, strategies, and projects – plus relevant evaluation metrics – are presented in six chapters that correspond to six regional character types:

1. Distinctive Major Cities
2. Smaller Cities
3. Vital Connections
4. Agricultural Areas
5. Public Land Resources
6. Four-Season Recreation

A total of 60 regional initiatives and projects were proposed in the Plan's public review draft to advance the strategies. During the public review period the Western Greater Yellowstone Consortium asked the public to identify the proposed initiatives and projects of greatest importance to the region.



FIGURE 1. LANDSCAPE CHARACTERS



Those initiatives and projects that received public support AND have secured local, voluntary leadership are listed in each chapter as implementation priorities.

Finally, Section V lists the 20 research studies that form the Teton View resource library (organized in seven appendices) plus other references used in the preparation of the Plan.

About Sustainability Indicators

Woven throughout this document are a series of “indicators” to measure outcomes from implementing of the Teton View Regional Plan. In the simplest sense, an indicator monitors the condition of a system and shows how well it is working, whether it is a company, a financial market or a geographic region.

A sustainability indicator, particularly in the context of a community or region, focuses on the relationships and interactions among key elements such as the economy, environment and society.

Indicators can serve as alerts to emerging problems or challenges and help policy makers recognize the steps that need to be taken to address them. Characteristics of effective indicators include the following:¹

- They are relevant to the goals of regional plans and/or local plans and track meaningful desired outcomes;
- They are clear and concise and do not rely on overly complex definitions or calculations that are difficult for stakeholders, decision makers or the public to understand;
- They are well grounded in good-quality data and are therefore credible;
- They are usable in making decisions that affect the region, reflecting topics that regional planners can address through local plans or policies;
- They provide for a long-range view, rather than tracking disconnected short-term outcomes;
- They are based on reliable and regularly reported data and can be consistently and accurately tracked over time; and
- They cover multiple social, economic, and/or environmental topics.

THE ROLE OF INDICATORS IN THE TETON VIEW REGIONAL PLAN

By regularly monitoring their performance, project leaders can use sustainability indicators to determine whether the region is moving toward or away from its desired outcomes.

¹ Hart, Maureen. 2006. *Guide to Sustainable Community Indicators, 2nd Ed. Sustainable Measures, West Hartford, CT.*

More specifically, sustainability indicators – designed to be well aligned with the Plan – will help monitor and measure progress across the Plan’s themes and strategies. They will signal whether progress is being made toward intended outcomes, and whether corrective action needed to achieve new policies or initiatives is necessary.

Regional sustainability indicators can also be a powerful way to help each county and city in the region, as well as other state and federal resource agencies, link and align their plans. If each major plan in the region – for example, each county or city comprehensive plan – were to integrate a common set of indicators, this would provide a platform for collaborating interests, sharing data to understand regional trends, and coordinating on those issues that are common to the region.

Finally, coordinating the tracking of regional indicators can also help organizations such as non-profits, schools, and chambers of commerce, to collaborate and partner with public agencies on issues of shared interest.

While there is no one proposed central organization to track and report on the indicators, the Plan provides guidance for local, state and/or federal agencies to integrate them into their respective plans so that each jurisdiction can work toward common regional outcomes with similar indicators. Periodically, jurisdictions will come together to collaborate

on regional issues and evaluate indicator trends.

The Plan’s indicators are the culmination of a multi-year process to discuss with the region’s stakeholders what matters to them and how to measure what matters. They also reflect extensive research into indicator best practices, and how the region can best build on available data to consistently measure progress.

TYPES OF INDICATORS

The Plan includes both system and performance indicators.² Performance indicators include metrics specific to topics such as agriculture, jobs/economic growth, multi-modal transportation, education, wildlife, recreation, and affordable housing. Performance indicators are listed under specific chapters and themes; the Plan includes a total of 17 performance indicators.

System indicators can be considered as the “vital signs” for the health of the region as a whole, focusing on critical issues of quality of life as well as the interdependence of the region. The Plan includes three system indicators addressing healthy waters, housing and transportation affordability, and the degree of interconnectedness among the region’s cities and counties. For each system indicator, identifying regional organizations or entities to compile data, regularly track trends, and communicate results with others in the region would help manage these regional vital signs over time.

² Innes, Judith and David Booher. 2000. *Indicators for Sustainable Communities: A strategy building on complexity theory and distributed intelligence*. *Planning Theory and Practice*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 173-186.



**THIS INDICATOR IS
A COMPOSITE OF
THREE DIFFERENT
INDICATORS FOCUSED
ON THE HEALTH OF
THE REGION'S WATERS,
INCLUDING QUANTITY
AND QUALITY.**

Why

Water is important to the entire region for economic, environmental, and social reasons. Additionally, "clean water and air" was the attribute most valued by the region's residents for contributing to quality of life.

Water sustains the region's recreation and fisheries. It is also critical for the region's agriculture and recreation industries. With a changing climate water will be increasingly stressed as precipitation patterns change and drought conditions threaten water availability. Watersheds also cut across counties and water quality is tied to good land use practices.

As such, three primary elements contribute to this "healthy waters" system indicator. It measures overarching conditions and designations that indicate threats to water quantity and quality including composite water supply, groundwater levels, and total miles/area of waters impaired by pollutants. Together these indicators can help illustrate when major changes are occurring that threaten the region's water use and health. As data may become more available over time, the region may wish to add groundwater quality to this system indicator as groundwater contamination is also a concern in the region.

UNITS OF MEASURE

Components of this indicator include the following:

- Groundwater levels at select representative wells in each jurisdiction. (Depth in Feet)
- Surface Water Supply Indices (SWSIs) for the major watershed basins covering each jurisdiction. These indices measure available surface water supply in relation to historical levels and are calculated by adding spring reservoir carryover (end vs. beginning of the season) and spring streamflow runoff levels (Average Total Flow in Acre Feet and/or Index Value). Essentially, these indices are measuring trends in basin-level consumption vs. natural supply (snowpack, runoff).
- Water quality impairment, which is measured in total acres of surface water bodies and miles of streams listed as impaired on state water quality reports 303(d).

For this system indicator, looking at the components separately as well as in relation to each other will help provide a complete picture of water health. For example, water supply as measured by the SWSI provides a clear trend-line of water supply over time, but since that may be more affected by such variables as annual precipitation, it is important to also look at groundwater levels to see whether they are both trending the same direction in a given year, or whether there is a disparity. Increasing depths to water table would be indicative of less sustainable overall water use patterns in terms of aquifer recharge, while increasing values for the SWSI would be positive indicators

that water management is either being more effective, or that weather patterns are resulting in more moisture. For the water quality component, increasing area/miles of impaired waters could indicate a need for improved pollution management practices.

SOURCE

Sources for the components of this indicator are identified below.

- Groundwater Levels:
 - » Idaho: Data for this component are kept by the Idaho Department of Water Resources and are publicly available. The portal is located at: <http://www.idwr.idaho.gov/hydro.online/gwl/>
 - » Wyoming: Data for this component are monitored by the Ground Water Division of the Wyoming State Engineer's Office located at: <http://seo.wyo.gov/ground-water>
- Surface Water Supply:
 - » Data for this component are managed by the National Resource Conservation Service through the SWSI portal found at: <http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/wsf/swsi.html>
- Water Quality:
 - » Data for this indicator are reported every two years to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The 303(d) listings are available from the EPA at: http://iaspub.epa.gov/waters10/attains_nation_cy.control?p_report_type=T





THIS INDICATOR IS A COMPOSITE INDICATOR THAT INCLUDES HOUSING AND TRANSPORTATION COSTS AS A PERCENTAGE OF WAGES.

Why

Housing costs and an ability to earn a good living wage were the top threats to the region identified by quality of life survey participants. Because of the relatively low cost of housing in Fremont and Teton counties, Idaho, people travel long distances from home to work in Rexburg and Jackson, respectively. Depending on the distance, social impacts may result including increased isolation in small cities and loss of diversity in the region's larger cities. In some cases the reduction in costs paid for housing in a distant county is more than offset by the additional costs of commuting.

One of the most significant variables that affects both economic and social impacts is the time spent commuting. Longer commutes take away time that could otherwise be utilized more productively participating in community activities or earning additional income. In addition, increased numbers of commuter vehicles can stress existing transportation infrastructure and affect the region's Class I air quality.

This indicator demonstrates the interconnectedness and scale of housing and transportation in individual counties. Since these counties are also closely intertwined, with jobs being in one county and housing in another, the indicator can also indicate disparities between wages and available housing between counties. This indicator can also be tied to transit availability; since transit is typically more affordable than using a personal vehicle.

UNITS OF MEASURE

This indicator is measured in terms of a combined housing and transportation percentage. Each jurisdiction (city and county) will have a percentage of housing affordability as a function of annual money spent relative to income and the same percentage for transportation costs. The sum of these percentages will result in the Housing and Transportation Index for that city or county.

Increasing values for this indicator could mean that there continues to be less affordable housing proximate to job centers that can pay enough to live in these places. Decreasing values could mean that wages are increasing, home prices and rents are decreasing, consumers are utilizing public transit at a higher rate, or some combination of the above.

SOURCE

Data for this indicator are available from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) at: <http://www.locationaffordability.info/> and can be analyzed by navigating to the Location Affordability Index page and entering the specific cities, counties, or zip codes. It is recommended to use the default variables to ensure consistency, but the data can also be altered to look at specific demographic populations. A willing and able regional organization could be identified to regularly track and report out on trends over time.



Why

This indicator examines the extent to which cities and counties are working together to reach common goals. The number of opportunities that local governments and organizations are creating to interact are reflected in the number of cross-jurisdictional agreements and participation in collaborative meetings. By combining this potential with a measure of the extent to which localities are tracking performance on common sustainability indicators, a broad picture will emerge illustrating the degree of connectivity.

As local governments form intergovernmental agreements (IGAs) to work with one another out of necessity and desire, there is a shared intent for the agreements to result in success. That shared intent tends to build rapport and understanding over time. When representatives from different cities and counties participate in inter-jurisdictional meetings, issues can be aired, common ground can be sought, and resolution attained. As the localities move through their processes to determine which indicators to track more robustly, the extent to which they are mirroring efforts in adjacent jurisdictions will result in stronger bonds and more complete information.

This indicator is a baseline of interconnectedness, which can be supplemented with looking at the more qualitative aspects of relationships. In addition to how many times people see each other and agree, the quality of those interactions will help dictate to what extent a spirit of collaboration grows.

UNITS OF MEASURE

This indicator is measured as a sum of independent variables. The number of IGAs in place for a given year between multiple jurisdictions will be combined with the number of inter-jurisdictional meetings attended by multiple entities. The number of indicators will be included when at least two jurisdictions have reported on them. The three numbers will be added into an index.

An increase in the indicator will most likely mean that there is greater collaboration among jurisdictions and that there are relatively frequent opportunities for interaction. A decrease could indicate fewer opportunities to interact or that fewer indicators are being tracked over time. Though the total IGAs over the course of the year should account for some variability, it is possible that a number could come to their conclusion at once, which may skew the indicator downward.

SOURCE

Data for this indicator will be compiled internally by each locality, agency, or organization. A willing and able regional organization could be identified to regularly track and report out on trends over time. The number of IGAs and meetings will be recorded, as will the indicators that are being tracked. These data points should be shared annually and cross-checked to arrive at the final index value.

Public Participation Requirements and Philosophy

From the beginning of the grant process, HUD emphasized the importance of involving the public in all activities associated with the Western Greater Yellowstone Consortium. The Consortium members agreed and embraced the opportunity to design a full suite of public participation activities consistent with the fundamental principles of the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2). Those principles include the IAP2 Core Values (<http://www.iap2.org/?page=A4>) and Code of Ethics (<http://www.iap2.org/?page=8>) to guide the design and implementation of public

involvement activities. The complexity of the project as a whole has afforded multiple opportunities for participation by stakeholders, depending on their specific interests.

In what is called its Public Participation Spectrum, IAP2 also outlines five possible levels of public involvement (http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/Foundations_Course/IAP2_P2_Spectrum.pdf) including inform, consult, involve, collaborate, and empower. Four of those levels have been used over the duration of the project, in accordance with specific needs as shown in Figure 2.

FIGURE 2. IAP2’s Public Participation Spectrum

IAP2’S PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SPECTRUM



The IAP2 Federation has developed the Spectrum to help groups define the public’s role in any public participation process. The IAP2 Spectrum is quickly becoming an international standard.

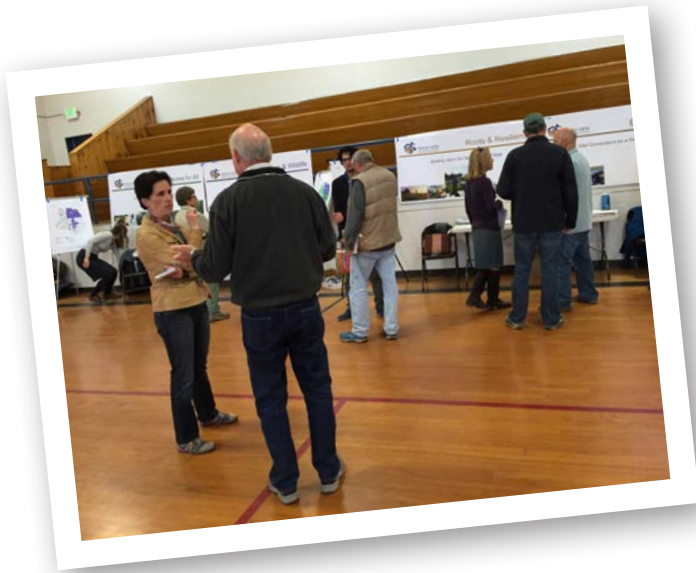
		INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION				
		INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL		To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
	PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision. We will seek your feedback on drafts and proposals.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work together with you to formulate solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

SOURCE: IAP2 International Federation

© IAP2 International Federation 2014. All rights reserved.

Inform: The Consortium has hosted a website (<http://sustainablyyellowstone.org/library/>) that has been updated as information becomes available. All documents produced over the course of the project are posted here. Documentation of all public participation, including Consortium meeting records and annual summit presentations, can be found on the project website.

Consult: The Consortium has invited input from the public at various junctures with each individual study and throughout the project. One example is the Wayfinding Signage Project for the City of Driggs, Idaho. Following a community workshop where information was shared to explain “wayfinding,” stakeholders had the opportunity to submit comments and assist a contractor in developing Sign Design Plan for Driggs. Please refer to the specific project reports contained in the appendices for descriptions of how each contractor has consulted with stakeholders.



Involve: Some studies have afforded more frequent involvement of key stakeholders throughout their development. One example is the Greater Yellowstone Trail Concept Plan. The project team traveled the entire length of the proposed 182-mile Greater Yellowstone Trail corridor in 2014 to meet with stakeholders in each community and view existing sections of rail bed or trail. The intent of this two-day trip was to gain a feel for the area, verify trail gaps, and obtain a realistic understanding of community needs and desires. A November 21, 2014, workshop pulled 25 key stakeholders together to discuss the findings of the site visits, consider specific issues (i.e., motorized access, paving, etc.) and discuss various project proposals for completing the entire trail corridor.

Collaborate: The consortium formed “design teams” for several of the studies, including the following:

- Assessment of Teton View Agriculture for Local and Regional Markets
- Greater Yellowstone Framework for Local Governments
- Regional Recycling System Feasibility Study
- Regional Index of Sustainability Indicators
- Western Greater Yellowstone Area Housing Needs Assessment
- Regional Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice

These teams invited interested stakeholders to sit at the table with consortium members in designing and conducting studies. Each provided guidance on overall study design, drafted requests for proposals for contract services, assisted in reviewing proposals and selecting contractors, provided regionally appropriate technical information and guidance to selected contractors, and reviewed preliminary project reports prepared by contractors.



PROGRAM-WIDE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Some stakeholders have been engaged in the entire planning process since 2012. Program-wide public involvement opportunities have included:

1. A project kick-off meeting held on February 15, 2012. This session was attended by 59 people. Objectives for this session included:
 - » Sharing information about how the HUD grant would address common problems faced by the four counties in the Consortium
 - » Discussing how HUD's "livability principles" would be used to guide the Consortium's sustainable development plan
 - » Identifying existing resources, ongoing efforts, information gaps, and critical areas of focus
 - » Discussing the best ways to engage the interested public and underserved populations
 - » Inviting participants to sign up for one of the design teams to provide project direction.
2. An annual summit held on May 2, 2013 and attended by 48 people. Objectives for the session included: 1) providing an overall status of the project, 2) introductions to the two Regional Administrators for the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, 3) reports on the progress of several specific projects, and 4) obtaining input to inform the development of the Regional Index of Sustainability Indicators.
3. An annual summit held on May 7, 2014 and attended by 62 people. Objectives for the session included: 1) receiving an overall status of the project as well as project-specific status reports for most of the specific projects, and 2) providing feedback to HUD officials in response to the following four questions: a) In your experience, what have been the positive outcomes attributable to the HUD grant in our region to date? b) What barriers do you think the Western Greater Yellowstone Consortium has faced over the last two years? c) What strategies or resources might we consider to help overcome barriers and address gaps to finish and implement our plan? d) What suggestions do you have for HUD, DOT, and EPA as the Partnership for Sustainable Communities continues its work to strengthen communities, particularly for rural places?



In addition, the Consortium conducted a final public involvement period between February 23 and March 22, 2015. During the public involvement period, Consortium members provided briefings on the draft Teton View Regional Plan for the four county commissions and the seven city councils at regularly scheduled meetings. The briefings were designed to provide an overall orientation to the entire project as well as an introduction to the Teton View Regional Plan to the elected officials. A video was developed to introduce the Plan.

The public involvement period was designed to share the draft Teton View Regional Plan with interested members of the public and solicit input regarding 60 possible initiatives and projects. The initiatives and projects were organized into six regional character types and presented in the Draft Teton View Regional Plan. The public at large was invited to:

- Attend four open houses (one in each county) to talk with Consortium members and examine the document as a whole
- Complete an on-line or paper survey to rate 60 proposed projects
- Visit the website to watch the video, review all project documentation, and complete the survey.

The survey instrument was translated to Spanish and Spanish-language translators were present for all four open houses.

The open houses held during the public involvement period are summarized as follows:

- The Teton County Wyoming Open House was held in the Auditorium at the Teton County Library, located at 125 Virginian in Jackson, Wyoming on March 9, 2015 from 4:00 to 7:00 pm. A total of seven people signed in at the registration table for the Open House in Jackson.
- The Fremont County Open House was held in the Ashton Community Center Gymnasium, located at 925 Main in Ashton, Idaho, on March 12, 2015, from 4:00 to 7:00 pm. A total of 30 people signed in at the registration table for the Open House in Ashton; another ten or so people did not sign-in but attended.
- The Madison County Open House was held in the Community Room at the Madison County Library, located at 73 North Center in Rexburg, Idaho, on March 18, 2015, from 4:00 to 7:00 pm. A total of 20 people signed in at the registration table for the Open House in Rexburg.
- The Teton County, Idaho, Open House was held in the Auditorium at Victor Elementary School, located at 43 East Center in Victor, Idaho, on March 19, 2015, from 4:00 to 7:00 pm. A total of 27 people signed in at the registration table for the Open House in Victor.

A total of 150 people completed surveys; twenty of those surveys were completed in Spanish. Those completing the survey online were required to provide the zip code of their primary residence. Based on those responses, the residence of survey participants is illustrated in the following chart.

In addition, four people submitted comments in letters addressed to Fremont County.

Complete results from the public involvement period, including the results of the survey and copies of the letters sent to Fremont County, are provided in Appendix G.

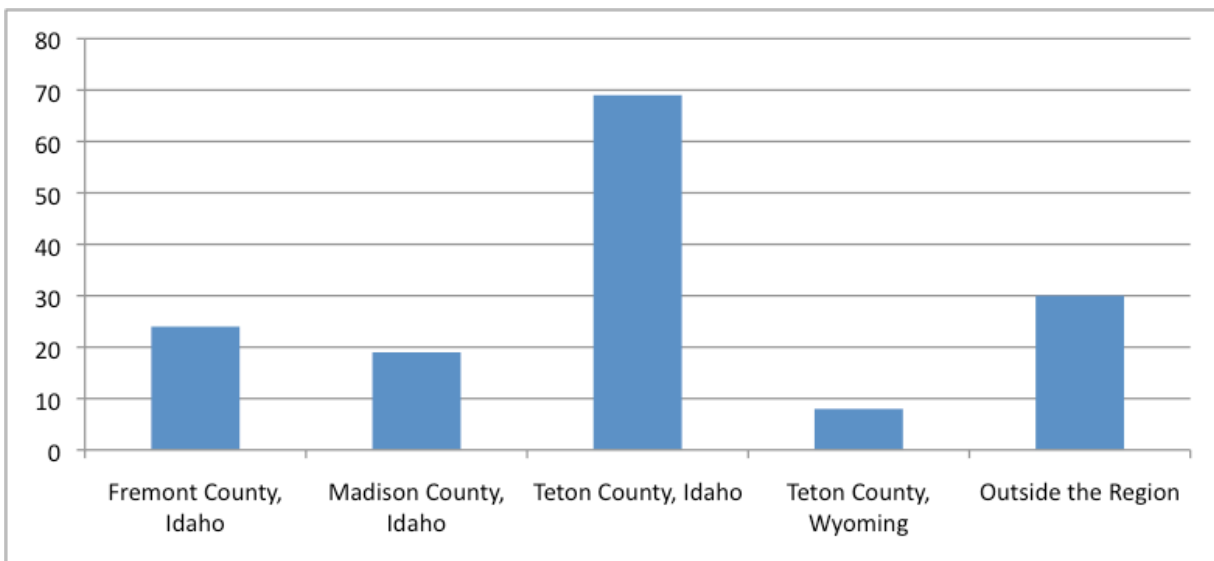


FIGURE 3.

Location of Primary Residence for Survey Participants

