

## Rural ED Pro Reporting

(Due the 7<sup>th</sup> of September, November, January, March, May, & July...for the previous 2 months. If the 7<sup>th</sup> falls on a weekend, the report is due the following Monday)

**Program: Blaine County (Sun Valley Economic Development)**

**Date Range: November-December 2025**

**Submit to:** [ruralreports@commerce.idaho.gov](mailto:ruralreports@commerce.idaho.gov)

### 1. Executive Summary

Key Achievements:

- Selected, announced and began the transition of a new Executive Director.
- Emphasis of the transition work has been on establishing relationships at the state, municipal and private sector member levels, in addition to knowledge transfer in major advocacy areas, such as housing/land use, workforce development, early childhood learning and sustainability.
- Attended a “Legislative Day” with our District 26 Idaho state representatives, with invitations to meet further with them in Boise during the upcoming 2026 session.
- Began foundation-laying discussions with multiple departments within Boise State University to expand relationships and discuss collaboration opportunities.

Summarize the top 2-5 points within 1-3 sentences. Make sure any information in the executive summary is covered in further detail in the rest of the report

### 2. Project Updates

**New ED for SVED** – After 15 years, Harry Griffith is stepping down as Executive Director of SVED. Mel Jackson has been selected by the SVED Board to succeed Harry. SVED is fortunate that Harry and Mel are able to transition the role over a few months in late 2025 and early 2026. Harry will continue in a part-time consulting capacity for SVED through 2026.

**ARCH Leadville Housing Project** – Submitted a letter of support to the City of Ketchum for this proposed 11-unit housing project, which subsequently received P&Z approval to proceed.

**River Bend Community Housing Project** – Submitted a letter of support to the Blaine County Commissioners for this proposed 77-unit housing project near St. Luke’s Wood River Hospital, which subsequently received approval to proceed.

**Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses** – Made a final marketing push and was able to get one SVED member to apply for this business training program before the deadline. In total, we had four applications submitted from Blaine County for this program.

**Alpine World Cup** – Completed an Economic Impact Analysis of the 2025 event indicating the value to Idaho and the local community was approximately \$16 Million in total. We have been told that an announcement regarding the 2027 event will be forthcoming in January 2026.

**Viceroy Hotel Ketchum** – Visited and toured the new 71-key hotel site with the ownership group. Project schedule calls for an early summer soft opening with full operations expected in July.

**America 250 Grant** – Submitted a letter of support for the City of Hailey for grant-funding for a series of historical floats for their 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade, which is traditionally a big economic driver in the county.

**SVED Economic Roundtable (Q1 2026)** – Planning has started on this.

**5B CAN** - Attended the Land Use & Transportation task force session within the much-broader December meeting of this regional sustainability and climate program to both introduce myself and learn. Later provided comments on their proposed local sustainability certification program document.

Include all projects that are currently ongoing in your area, even if you are not directly involved. This should be: Ongoing Commerce funded projects, construction projects, planning projects, and business attraction. If your project is confidential, please make a note.

### 3. Community Impact

- Met with representatives at BSU in the following areas:
  - Resort & Hospitality Management (for vocational training and internships)
  - Idaho Policy Institute (for Land Use)
  - Economic Development (for general relationship background)
  - College of Innovation & Design (for Cyber Security)
- Made introductions (with Ketchum hotel properties) regarding internships as well as planning a future Economic Roundtable based on discussions with the groups above.
- Met with board members of Ketchum Business Advisory Group to both introduce myself and discuss ways in which we could work together in 2026 and beyond.
- Met with Frontier Community Resources to both introduce myself and discuss ways that our two organizations can continue to support one another.
- Met with Blaine County Recreation District to both introduce myself and discuss ways that SVED could support them going forward (e.g. renewed ballot initiative for bond). Later I introduced BCRD to Frontier Community Resources and sat in on a call between them to explore possible grant opportunities.

The community impact section should be for projects that are directly tied to community improvement. This could be non-construction updates for housing, parks, recreation, and community events that bring in tourists and visitors. This section is where you should include any grants that were submitted/awarded. Include any businesses that have moved in or out of your community

### 4. Stakeholder Engagement

- Met with the **City of Ketchum** to introduce myself as new ED and to discuss ways SVED could help the City in 2026 and beyond. City personnel invited me to join their Technical Advisory Group as it resumes in 2026. I also attended a code-training session put on by the city.
- Met with the **City of Bellevue** to introduce myself as new ED and to discuss ways SVED could help the City in 2026 and beyond. Expressed a desire for one representative to attend the annual SVED retreat in January 2026 and to eventually nominate an ex-officio member to SVED's board. Suggested that they apply for a 5k SMILES grant via Frontier Community Resources before its deadline of 12/31/25. Finally, I expressed the hope that our renewed efforts in the South Valley (forthcoming in 2026) would convince them to support SVED financially as a dues-paying member.
- Met with multiple departments within **Idaho Commerce** (including Director Kealey) shortly after being named new Executive Director.
- Met with **Tom Beckwith**, Region VII representative of Idaho Commerce Economic Advisory Group.
- Met with **Wendy Jaquet** (former legislator and current influencer) to both introduce myself and get her take on our municipal governments as well as a preview of the

upcoming state legislative session. Attended the District 26 Legislative Day she organized where I met our state legislators as well as numerous local government officials. She also invited me to attend an upcoming City Tours event in Montana (April 2026).

- Met with **Wendolyn Holland**, Commissioner with City of Ketchum's Historic Preservation Commission.
- Met 1-on-1 with **Jules Belyea** of Idaho Commerce's Rural Services Team.
- Via a SVED Board Member, requested that she convince her friend, the Mayor of Carey, to apply for a 5k SMILES grant via Frontier Community Resources before its year-end deadline.

Include any meetings with any elected officials, businesses, government agencies. This section is where all Main Street updates should go. The Main Street Section should include any updates to the downtown areas of cities.

## 5. Events

**Visit Sun Valley – Outdoor Recreation Group Meeting** – I attended this semi-annual meeting to get the pulse from recreation outfitters active in the area.

**SVED Executive Committee and Full Board December Meetings** – These both took place in December.

**Visit Sun Valley – Lodging Association** – Attended this call in December.

**Visit Sun Valley – December Board Meeting** – Attended in-person in December. Later provided comments on their draft Resident Sentiment survey.

**Sun Valley Film Festival** – Successful 14<sup>th</sup> annual film festival with a new early-December date, helping to fill a soft spot in the tourism calendar.

This section will include all the events that you attended. Events that should be documented are conferences, board meetings, summits, presentations, and state events. Please include any major takeaways or discoveries

## 6. Financial Overview

- Reconciliation of Fiscal 2025 Year-End Actuals vs. Budget
- Preparation of Fiscal 2026 Draft Budget

This section should include any financial updates that IDOC needs to know about

## 7. Businesses Contacted – All Contacts were onsite Meetings:

- **Conrad Brothers**
- **Viceroy Hotel**
- **Zenergy SV**
- **Hunger Coalition**
- **Keller Williams Realty**
- **Zion's Bank**
- **The Cellar Pub**
- **Idaho Power**
- **Fly Sun Valley Alliance**
- **Visit Sun Valley**
- **Cox**
- **Limelight Hotel**

- **Spur Foundation**
- **Idaho First Bank**
- **Michael Doty Associates**
- **Sawtooth Brewery**
- **Far + Wise**
- **Sun Valley Culinary Institute**
- **Idaho Mountain Express**
- **City of Sun Valley**
- **City of Ketchum**
- **City of Hailey**
- **City of Bellevue**
- **Blaine County**
- **Sun Valley Company**
- **Babson College**
- **Frontier Community Resources**
- **Blaine County Recreation District**
- **Wood River Housing Trust**
- **Visit Sun Valley**

List all businesses contacted.