

Parks and Open Space

As detailed in Chapter 7 Parks and Recreation, the city's parks are spread throughout the community and serve as gathering places in addition to buffering development from natural hazards such as flooding. Due to the high value placed on parks and open spaces, ensuring that future residential developments incorporate these amenities is essential. Protecting areas of open space along floodplains and wetland areas is important to provide the community with recreational trails and wildlife corridors, as well as protecting water quality. The 2020 Parks and Recreation Master Plan identifies needed updates and improvements to facilities and programming and will need periodic updating to ensure current needs are being addressed.

AREA OF CITY IMPACT (ACI)

Sandpoint's Area of City Impact (ACI) is unincorporated land adjacent to the city that is collaboratively designated by the City and County as land that may someday be considered for annexation into the city. As such, ACI lands are included in comprehensive planning to facilitate City goals and help coordinate development patterns between the city and the ACI. Under the current ACI ordinance, certain types of development within the ACI, while technically in unincorporated Bonner County, are subject to review and comment by the City of Sandpoint.

This Comprehensive Plan update considered the ACI as an area that could reasonably be served by the city within the next twenty years, specifically whether extension of city utilities would be economically and physically possible in the next 5-10 years. The City anticipates renegotiating the ACI boundary with Bonner County and would propose a boundary based on that analysis. As shown in Map 5 Area of City Impact, the boundary that the City would propose is significantly smaller than the currently adopted ACI. Due to legislative changes passed into Idaho law in 2024 that affected ACI requirements, the negotiation of a new boundary and agreement are included as implementation steps in Appendix A. Existing development in the ACI is predominantly low-density and rural. Where developed, some lands are utilized for farming, though most are homes on characteristically large-sized rural lots. Some isolated commercial uses exist in the ACI as well. As part of the ACI renegotiation, a sub-area plan will be developed that will detail future land uses, transportation, and utility corridors. It is anticipated that the predominant future land use in the ACI will be residential at densities that can support extension of utilities, but mixed-use areas and small commercial nodes consistent with the Neighborhood Mixed Use land use category may also be possible.

Quasi-Public/Institutional

The city serves as a regional service center with an abundance of health care, school, government, religious, and non-profit facilities present. This land use category encompasses approximately 29 percent of the City's land area that does not contribute to the tax base.

