

# Eagle Stakeholder Interviews

## Interview Summary

Eagle City Hall

Sep 20 - 22, 2016



*The following pages summarize conversations had with “stakeholders” of the Eagle Comprehensive Plan Economic Development Component. These summaries express the hopes, concerns, and suggestions offered by those identified by the City to participate in these interviews. The conversations were conducted in confidence, and the comments related in this summary are not intended to be attributable to any individual. In all cases, topics included in this summary were discussed by more than one interviewee, though opinions on any given topic may have varied.*

*A total of 15 stakeholders were interviewed by Ryan Hughes of Studio Cascade Inc., and Alisa Pyska of Leland Consulting Group, Inc. Conversations were held at the city of Eagle’s City Hall over the course of three days: Tuesday, September 20 through Thursday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>. Additional phone interviews were scheduled for those unable to attend in-person meetings.*

### Stakeholders Interviewed

- Martha Cunningham – Owner, 3 Horse Ranch Vineyards
- Eric Exline - Chief Communication Officer, West Ada School District
- Steve Fultz – Economic Development Director, Caldwell, Idaho
- Nancy Vannorsdel – Resident, Former Boise Chamber of Commerce
- Blake Watson – Community Relations Representative, Idaho Power
- Dave Aizpitarte – Business Owner, Former City Planning and Zoning Commissioner
- Randy Mendiola – Board Member, Eagle Chamber of Commerce
- Amy Bailey - VP of Finance, TSheets Company
- Mayor Ridgeway
- Mike Aho – Director, Parks & Recreation Department
- Bill Vaughn – City Zoning Administrator
- Caleb Roope – President/CEO, The Pacific Companies
- Talena & Greg Baer - Landscape Architect, Design Review Board Member
- CJ Cacioppo – Rembrandts Coffee
- Mark Bottles – Commercial Real Estate Broker

### Topics

#### Who is Eagle? / Vision for the Future

*Stakeholders characterize the city as thoughtfully planned and well-dressed, clean and friendly. From its beginning, Eagle has been tied to its rural lifestyle, agriculture, the foothills and river. For many, moving to Eagle meant a rural and relaxed environment with proximity to Boise metro. Eagle also sees itself as a “high-end” community and envisions an elegant, well-to-do and up-scale community. A great place for families and seniors alike. Both strong design standards and engaged citizens have ensured its uniqueness and identity.*

*Old Town (Downtown) is where it all comes together. The small-town nature of Eagle still exists; though times are changing. Younger generations are well educated in Eagle’s remarkable schools. New industries and employment opportunities are emerging. Millennials and Gen-X’ers alike highly appreciate Eagle’s opportunities for outdoor recreation and believe this could be further developed.*

#### Quality of Life

*Many stakeholders expressed the high quality of life enjoyed in Eagle. Great schools, quality housing, a family-friendly environment, as well as convenient access to outdoor recreation (especially the Boise River Greenbelt and trail network). Life in Eagle is both pleasant and*

*rewarding. People love Eagle's quaint nature. Retaining its appeal will be a challenge as more people continue to call Eagle home.*

### **Creating Community – Sense of Place – Local Culture**

*With all of Eagle's great traits, stakeholders suggested that more work can be done to foster community and culture. As a 'bedroom community' to the Boise metro, continuing to develop Eagle's own 'sense of place' will be vital to sustain a strong future. More people living, working, and recreating downtown will strengthen the heart. A great example is Eagle's annual "Fun Days". Younger generations of Eagle residents want to be a part of a well-connected and active community.*

### **Downtown Focus**

*Old Town is the long-established heart of the city. It's a source of pride and community identity. Stakeholders noted that there are several issues facing downtown, including high-turnover of local retail. As a natural gateway, developing the intersection at Eagle Road and State Street is a primary concern. The proximity of higher-density residential opportunities near the downtown core will increase non-motorized activity and support business. A downtown merchants association [such as the 'Main Street' program] could spark opportunities and create additional vitality.*

### **Retail Services and Amenities**

*Stakeholders shared what they felt was a lack of certain services and amenities. The need for services is sensed by both residents and employers wishing to attract highly-skilled talent. The ability to "buy local" without trips to adjacent communities is appealing. Some of the added services envisioned include hotels, salon, cafes, fast-casual dining, as well as wine and beer opportunities. Additionally critical are healthcare services for seniors wishing to age-in-place.*

### **Economy**

*Stakeholders were eager and generous in sharing their ideas how to sustain the community's economic well-being. Thoughts ranged from focusing on the high-tech and professional office markets to bolstering the vitality of downtown. There is a general sentiment that large-scale manufacturing does not work in Eagle. Other 'basic' (or, traded) sector industries may have a place, but the scale must be appropriate. Stakeholders expressed excitement at the recent success of locally-based technology companies. Further concentration of like businesses would be a welcome addition.*

### **Available Land**

*Stakeholders expressed concerns with a growing lack of available, developable land for commercial and office use. There is simply not enough land available (or zoned), for construction of new commercial and office space. Current demand exists along the Eagle Road Corridor as well as lands within short commuting distances from downtown and Eagle's central city core.*

### **High-Tech and Professional**

*Based on its demographics and culture, stakeholders expressed their belief that any economic development strategy should highlight attracting both technology and professional services companies. A special focus should be on software and rec-tech design companies; tapping into the great outdoor access as well as proximity to the Boise workforce.*

### **Non-Motorized Connectivity**

*Eagle has done well in developing and designating its bicycle and pedestrian pathways. Connecting the greenbelt has been especially positive. However, stakeholders expressed their belief that more could be done to increase options and develop connectivity of the town's non-motorized transportation facilities. The North-South connections are difficult as most traffic flows along the Eagle Road Corridor. Stakeholders noted that improving non-motorized connectivity would add to livability and the desirability of future residents.*

### **Outdoor Recreation, Rec-tech and Agribusiness**

*Eagle is a great place for outdoor recreation. Most of the interviewees commented on the important role access to the outdoors and outdoor recreation has for city's residents. From cycling, jogging, hiking and fishing to name a few. Stakeholders expressed that additional opportunities exist to develop outdoor facilities and sectors, as well as making it key ingredient in any economic-development model for Eagle. Recreation technology (Rec-tech) and agriculture-based businesses such as wine are sectors that hold significant promise.*

### **Traffic**

*Eagle's rapid growth has been a huge boost to the economy. However, stakeholders expressed the impacts on traffic and congestion that this growth has had. Rush-hours are especially problematic with excessive wait-times at key intersections. Further growth must take traffic impacts into consideration; further highlighting the need for non-motorized transportation and non-traditional working hours.*

### **Housing**

*As a rural, bedroom-community, Eagle's housing stock has mostly developed as low-density, single-family. This, traditionally, has been a part of its appeal. However, as the population ages and a variety of ages and incomes seek to locate in Eagle, the lack of affordable options is concerning. Stakeholders suggested higher-density housing, especially near downtown, should be encouraged. Retirement housing options requiring little or low maintenance are also being desired.*

### **Infrastructure**

*For the community to realize its vision, a robust plan to improve and advance infrastructure is vital. Of particular note, stakeholders commented on the inability of the city to determine how, when, and where roads are built. This is the responsibility of both the Idaho Transportation Department and the Ada County Highway Commission. Proper coordination between roadway development and future economic development, housing, and land-uses is a challenge. The type and extent of the roadways must be considered. Furthermore, stakeholders suggested that high-powered broadband ICT is urgently needed if Eagle wants to attract and retain information-based business and encourage a technological employment cluster.*