This Comprehensive Plan is a statement of the community’s values and policies to guide the long-range physical development of the City and its Area of City Impact. Through the vision, goals, objectives, policies, and implementation strategies, this Plan provides a framework for decision making regarding land use and community character, all modes of transportation, adequate and affordable housing, livable neighborhoods, adequate public facilities and services, and economic development. The success of this Plan depends on the community’s commitment to planning and its acceptance of this Plan as a valid expression of community attitudes, values, and generally agreed-upon directions. This Plan helps to achieve more predictable and improved outcomes by guiding decisions and courses of action.

P.1 PURPOSE AND IMPORTANCE OF THIS PLAN

This Comprehensive Plan sets forth broad policies and goals that reflect the aspirations and visions of Moscow’s residents. It includes information on many facets of our community, such as population, socio-economics, physical conditions, land use, natural and built environments, transportation, legal, and fiscal aspects, which will all factor greatly into how, when, and where this community grows in the coming years. This Plan compares each of these aspects with the vision and preferred directions of the community’s residents to guide the desired future development of our community. It also serves as a valuable source of information to inform decision makers, grant writers, and the public about history, processes, techniques, and ideas for implementation.

This Plan is intended to:

- Improve the physical environment of the community as a setting for human activities.
- Promote the broader public interest rather than the interests of individuals or special groups.
- Facilitate democratic determination and implementation of community policy.
- Inspire political and technical coordination for future development.
Introduction and Purpose

- Ensure consideration of long-range and cumulative impacts for short-range decisions.
- Utilize professional and technical knowledge for making decisions.

P.1.1 The Purpose of Planning

“If you don’t know where you are going, any road will get you there.” (Lewis Carroll)

Planning helps direct development rather than reacting to individual proposals as they occur. Among other things, planning is necessary to protect community values, preserve heritage, and conserve resources. To this end, this Plan must be forward-looking, able to clearly articulate a vision, and able to provide strategic guidance to effectively lead the community’s decision makers in a common direction. This must be based on a balanced consideration of community-wide issues, interests, and desires. As a result, this community is more likely to realize its vision by adhering to this Plan than if individual decisions are made in its absence.

Planning Context

Planning is not new to Moscow. The very first act of planning that occurred in Moscow was when Lieuallen, Deakin, McGregor, and Russell each donated a portion of their landholdings to create the City Center in 1876. The City’s first comprehensive plan was developed in 1956 – now over 60 years ago. This was followed by plan updates in 1965, 1979, 1985, and most recently in 1999. This update is the City’s sixth plan, which aims at a 20-year planning horizon. As with any plan, this Plan will require periodic updates and amendments to ensure inclusion of the most current information, community desires, and policy directions. With ongoing and continuous planning, this Comprehensive Plan should serve the community as a strong foundation for decisions and development for many years to come.

Many plans, studies, and surveys have been conducted for and by the City of Moscow. These documents served as a resource for this Plan and are evidence of the community’s proactiveness in planning for the future. This Plan is mandated by State Code and required for consideration in all land use decisions. Inclusion of relevant information and directions from these other plans provides consistency and strengthens this Plan.

State of Idaho Planning Mandate

Each local government within the State of Idaho is required to adopt, by resolution, a comprehensive plan as required by the State of Idaho Local Land Use Planning Act or LLUPA (Title 67, Chapter 65 of Idaho State Code). Specifically, I.C. Section 67-6508 states:
It shall be the duty of the planning or planning and zoning commission to conduct a comprehensive planning process designed to prepare, implement, and review and update a comprehensive plan, hereafter referred to as the plan. The plan shall include all land within the jurisdiction of the governing board. The plan shall consider previous and existing conditions, trends, compatibility of land uses, desirable goals and objectives, or desirable future situations for each planning component...

LLUPA identifies 17 planning components, listed as (a) through (q), which a plan must be based upon. The maps, charts, and reports included in a plan support the components as they may apply to land use regulations. Additional components and subject matter may be considered in a plan to address any unique considerations of a particular community. This Plan includes all the planning components required by LLUPA and is organized into seven inter-related chapters, which are outlined in Table P.1, Plan Organization (see page P.8).

LLUPA also requires municipalities to adopt zoning and subdivision ordinances, by I.C. Sections 67-6511 and 67-6513, respectively. These ordinances must be in accordance with the policies set forth in the community’s adopted comprehensive plan as these regulations substantially contribute to the implementation of the Plan. Beyond the implementing regulations, Idaho Code requires that development proposals be consistent with and further the goals, objectives, and policies of the Plan in terms of land uses, densities or intensities, capacity or size, timing, and other aspects of the development. Thus, the Plan forms a common criterion against which all land use decisions are judged for compliance with and furtherance of the goals and objectives articulated by the community.

P.2 PROPERTY RIGHTS

The Constitution of the United States and the Idaho State Constitution both provide that private property cannot be taken for public use without just compensation. As such, the regulation of land uses must be based upon sound and clearly articulated planning principles that allow for viable economic uses of private property while protecting and promoting the health, safety, and welfare of the community.

P.2.1 Purpose of Regulation and Land Use Decision Process

Laws and regulations that govern private property should be based upon the government’s authority and responsibility to protect public health, safety, and welfare. Based upon this premise, courts have supported the limitation of the use of private property through land use planning regulations, including comprehensive plans, zoning ordinances, subdivision ordinances, and environmental quality acts.
Laws and regulations must be constructed so as to balance private property rights with assurances that impact from neighboring uses and development do not substantially and negatively affect another’s property rights by such elements as noise, pollution, or other nuisances. Idaho State Code sets forth regulations and guidelines for the conducting of decisions regarding land use matters in order to protect private property rights.

P.2.2 Regulatory Takings

While governmental entities can take property for articulated public purposes with just compensation, such as for the construction of highways or other similar projects, governmental regulation is a more subtle means by which a taking may occur. This type of taking is often referred to as a regulatory taking and is a situation where governmental regulations restrict the available uses of a property to such a degree as to prohibit any economically viable use of the property. The public review process required by Idaho State Code for evaluating proposed regulations is a method to safeguard rights of private property owners. The City should use the public review process to carefully consider the potential impacts to property rights for land use decisions and legislation. If property is subject to regulatory jurisdiction of multiple government agencies, each agency should be sensitive to the cumulative impacts of the various regulatory restrictions.

To assist local governments in avoiding an unintended regulatory taking, the State of Idaho Attorney General provides a list of questions to be utilized in judging the potential of land use decisions and legislation to create regulatory takings. While these questions provide a framework for evaluating the impact of proposed regulations, takings questions normally arise in the context of a specific affected property. Although a question may be answered affirmatively, it does not mean that there has been a “taking.” Rather, it means there could be a constitutional issue and that the City should carefully review the proposed action.

P.3 PLANNING PROCESS

The planning process does not simply begin with public meetings and end with the adoption of the Plan. Rather, it is ongoing and ever-changing as development occurs, new ideas emerge, and values evolve. As these changes are made, it is important that they are wholly compatible with the present and future functioning of the community. The long-range vision contained within this Plan was prepared and adopted in 2009 through a comprehensive public input process that is described in detail below.

In 2018, the Planning and Zoning Commission, with the input and advice of other City Commissions, prepared a mid-term revision of the 2009 Plan to update statistics and other data, recognize completion of the water, sanitary
sewer and transportation plans, reflect completed implementation actions since adoption, and to incorporate additional information, goals and objectives related to changing global climate conditions. A more comprehensive community revisioning is anticipated to be completed as the plan approaches the original 20-year planning horizon, unless it is deemed necessary to review the Plan sooner due to community change or other considerations.

**P.3.1 2009 Public Participation and Input**

Capturing the issues, values, and vision of the community was a critically important step in developing this Plan. To prepare a plan that accurately reflects what citizens want their community to be in the future, their ideas and desires must be collected, documented, and integrated into the plan. To this end, the process of this Plan included an extensive public outreach and participation program. The citizen engagement program identified opportunities and constraints to guide the formulation of the Plan’s goals and policies. A summary of the public participation efforts and a detailed record of their comments is available.

**Moscow Dialogues.** A series of meetings were conducted at the outset of the planning process and again when the first draft of the Plan was completed. For each set of meetings, one was held in each of nine neighborhoods. The first set of meetings held May 1-3, 2007, allowed residents to describe their neighborhood character and discuss their favorite aspects of, and their biggest concerns for, their neighborhood and the community as a whole. The second set of meetings was conducted on June 5-7, 2007, and the participants discussed in greater detail their experiences, ideas, and concerns for the topics discussed in the Plan including land use, mobility, parks and recreation, growth management, and economic development. A third set of meetings was conducted on February 25-26, 2008, and March 4-5, 2008, to introduce the draft Plan to the community and again solicit their thoughts and suggestions.

**Community-wide Meetings.** On May 17, 2007, the Moscow Citizens’ Congress was held at the Hamilton Indoor Recreation Center. The objective of this public forum was to explain the planning process and receive initial input from a broadly representative group of citizens. More than 130 people attended and provided valuable information. As an exercise, attendees were asked to indicate on a map their place of residence and place of work. It also helped in the identification of major employers and commercial areas within the community and reinforced the notion that this is truly a regional community, where many commute to, from, and within the community.

An Open House was held March 20, 2008, to obtain citizen input on the first draft of the Plan. Two additional Open House meetings were held on April 21 and April 23, 2009, to review the revised draft plan.
Introduction and Purpose

Opportunities to Comment. There were so many issues to discuss and ideas to contemplate that community members needed additional ways to be heard. Therefore, a website was established to provide information regarding the planning process, to provide access to the draft plan elements, and as yet another method for obtaining comments. Comment cards were also available at all of the public meetings to allow an opportunity for written comment.

Working Groups. The consultant met with nine working groups during May 2007, to identify issues and priorities among relatively organized segments of the community including:

- **Housing**, including the Fair and Affordable Housing Commission;
- **Transportation**, including the Transportation Commission and the Paradise Path Task Force;
- **Natural Resources**, including the Sustainable Environment Commission and the Tree Commission;
- **Parks, Recreation, and Open Space**, including the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Paradise Path Task Force;
- **Central Business**, including the Moscow Arts Commission, Urban Renewal Agency, and the Chamber of Commerce;
- **Neighborhood Preservation**, including the Historic Preservation Commission;
- **Economic Development**, including the Chamber of Commerce, URA, and the Latah Economic Development Council;
- **Civic Organizations**, including the Moscow Civic Association and the Greater Moscow Alliance;
- **Redevelopment**, including the Urban Renewal Agency and stakeholders within the then-proposed downtown urban redevelopment area, and now the Legacy Crossing Urban Renewal District;

P.3.2 2009 Plan Development and Adoption

Steering Committee. The Mayor and Council appointed a Steering Committee with the charge to oversee and guide the planning process and development of a draft Plan, and to make decisions and recommendations based upon the issues and values of the community. Initially, the committee represented 22 members of the City’s boards and commissions, major employers, and community organizations, and was later expanded to 23 members to accommodate changes in representation. Because the Steering Committee represented many community groups and interests in Moscow, it provided a broad and diverse representation ensuring that the Plan reflects the shared values and expectations of the community. The Steering Committee met often throughout the process to review the draft Plan chapters and consider comments from the Moscow Dialogues, community-wide meetings, website and comment cards, and
working groups.

Public Hearings. The Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council reviewed the revised draft Plan on March 11, 2009. The Commission subsequently considered the draft Plan and conducted a public hearing on October 28, 2009, in accordance with I.C. Section 67-6509. After receiving testimony and considering the merits of the Plan, the Commission recommended adoption of the Plan to the City Council. A public hearing was held by the City Council on December 7, 2009, at which time they adopted the Plan by resolution.

P.3.3 Monitoring and Amendments

In order to be effective and successful, this Plan must be a “living” and dynamic document. The community decision makers rely on the Plan and, therefore, periodic reviews and amendments must be made to keep the Plan current. The Plan was reviewed and updated in 2019 to include the most up-to-date information, methods, and maps, and to update the objectives and implementation actions. Information contained within numerous other City plans was utilized for the 2019 update, and more detailed information and directives related to each subject that is covered can be found within those specific documents. See Figure 1.1, Contributing City Plans. It is recommended that this Plan continue to be updated on a periodic basis and a more comprehensive revisioning of the Plan be completed as the Plan approaches the original 20-year planning horizon.

P.4 PLAN ORGANIZATION

While the Local Land Use Planning Act requires that comprehensive plans within the State of Idaho address the 17 identified topics, (one of which is only required upon notification from the Public Utilities Commission), many of these subject matters are deeply interrelated. This Plan is therefore organized into a total of eight chapters (including the Preface) within which all the required topics, as well as those not required, are addressed. Table P.1, Plan Organization (next page), is provided as a guide to assist in locating
# Table P.1
## Plan Organization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Scope</th>
<th>Statutory Requirement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preface: Introduction and Purpose</td>
<td>Outlines the purpose and importance of the plan, addresses property rights, describes the public participation program, and discusses private property rights.</td>
<td>(a) Property Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter One: A Vision for Moscow</td>
<td>Outlines the community history, natural resources and hazards in the area, and incorporates a statement of community vision.</td>
<td>(f) Natural Resources (g) Hazardous Areas (n) Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Two: Community Character and Land Use</td>
<td>Outlines key land use related issues, goals, and recommendations. This element will also include policies to guide future zoning and land use decisions. Detailed recommendations regarding necessary modifications of the development ordinances will also be integrated into the chapter.</td>
<td>(e) Land Use; (k) Special Areas or Sites; (l) Housing; (m) Community Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Three: Community Mobility</td>
<td>Outlines key transportation related issues, goals, and recommendations. The chapter will include recommendations regarding roadway cross-sections and necessary modifications to the subdivision regulations.</td>
<td>(i) Transportation (q) Public Airport facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Four: Parks, Recreation and Open Space</td>
<td>Outlines key recreation issues, goals, and recommendations. The chapter will include recommendations regarding proposed new park and greenway locations along with facility development standards.</td>
<td>(j) Recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Five: Public Utilities, Services, and Growth Capacity</td>
<td>Outlines key growth and facility-related issues, goals, and recommendations. This chapter will essentially examine the City's capacity to sustain its current development and support future development, including evaluations of infrastructure capacities, facility needs, and demands. Additionally, it will include strategies and recommended mechanisms for managing the pattern of growth within the Area of City Impact.</td>
<td>(b) Population; (c) School Facilities and Transportation; (h) Public Services, Facilities, and Utilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Six: Economic Development</td>
<td>Provides recommendations regarding land use measures that are intended to promote economic development.</td>
<td>(d) Economic Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Seven: Implementation</td>
<td>Includes a table of prioritized action items to facilitate work planning by City departments and staff, tracking of implementation progress and accomplishments in a “checklist” fashion, and easy re-arrangement of the table as priorities are re-examined periodically.</td>
<td>(o) Implementation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Under I.C Section 67-6508(p), after notification by the Public Utilities Commission concerning the potential federal designation of a national interest electric transmission corridor, comprehensive plans shall include an analysis of existing and possible future routing of high voltage transmission lines. The City of Moscow has not received this notification and therefore the Plan does not currently address this element.
where the statutory topics are found within the document.

**P.4.1 Goals, Objectives, and Implementation Actions**

Within the Plan, specific goals and objectives are identified for the various topics addressed with the Plan. The Goal statements serve as the broad articulation of a community desire, direction, or policy. The Goal statements are then followed by a series of Objectives which are specific components that support the achievement of the identified Goals. Finally, the Objectives are followed by Implementation Actions which are specific, measurable and actionable items that support the achievement of the Objectives, and in turn the supported Goal.