



City of Nampa

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Carol A. McKee, Chairman
COMPASS
700 NE 2nd Street, Suite 200
Meridian, Idaho 83642

City of Nampa comments on the 2040 Communities in Motion Growth Scenarios

Dear Ms. McKee,

Thank you for continuing to include the City of Nampa in the 2040 Communities in Motion (2040CIM) planning process. Comments presented below are based on the City's review of all four draft growth scenarios.

Overall

The City of Nampa applauds the effort that has gone into creating these scenarios. COMPASS' Board specifically directed this activity to take place and committed nearly \$200,000 of direct costs and countless hours of staff time to make it a reality. Nampa understands that scenarios had to be completed quickly so the rest of CIM2040 could proceed as required by Federal Highway Administration deadlines. It is unfortunate that the pressure of this schedule appears to have resulted in less-than-desirable products. It is the City's choice, therefore, not to state a single preference among the four scenarios. Rather, our recommendations combine elements from several. Typical concerns are highlighted below followed by those recommendations.

Concerns

The City has several broad concerns regarding the scenarios. These four are symptomatic:

- A. Failure to acknowledge and address Comprehensive Plans is the single greatest handicap of the entire scenario development process. Understanding the importance of Comp Plans to a city – to Nampa – is critical as the Comp Plan established the context within which City staff undertook scenario assessments. Our Comp Plan establishes the City's vision of a desirable future; it was developed under the guidance of a broadly-representative steering committee; and it has recently been adopted by the Nampa City Council as its official blueprint for the next twenty-five years.

In general, where a scenario indicator or objective is inconsistent with the Nampa City Comp Plan, the City will endeavor to implement the Comp Plan rather than the scenario.

There are many reasons for this, a primary one being the ordinance structure that supports and implements the Comp Plan's vision. Despite the limitations this places on implementing the final adopted scenario, we anticipate this is likely the case for most if not all cities in the Treasure Valley.

The current version of Nampa's Comprehensive Plan was adopted early in 2012. It grew in part out of a realization that incredible growth of the past two decades has created both challenges and opportunities: from 1990 to 2000, the City grew by 83%; from 2000 to 2010, by another 57%. Though the City will continue to grow, the new plan establishes a more modest annual growth rate of about 2%. This still results in over 50,000 new Nampa residents and nearly 20,000 new Nampa households by the year 2035. Extending the plan's demographic projections to 2040, consistent with CIM2040's horizon year, population swells to at least 160,000 with more than 55,000 households and 70,000 jobs.

Many of the scenario process' "indicators" parallel components of Nampa's Comp Plan. They are implemented in the Comp Plan, however, according to Nampa's preferences and not that of the scenarios. The Comp Plan highlights the need to direct projected growth into sustainable development patterns, for example. It highlights a demand for greater residential density, and proposes a priority goal to create jobs in Nampa, thus reducing current outbound commuting patterns into Ada County. Several new land uses were created to ensure this occurs. A steering committee worked with City staff, service providers, and experts to determine priority locations for multiple development types. Land uses indicate prime areas for mixed-use, commercial, industrial, and residential development after careful consideration of providing services to those locations and the trends in each development sector. Nampa's vision is a community that is more self sufficient, is better connected through multiple forms of transportation, creates destinations nearer to neighborhoods, increases the ratio of jobs to households, and both encourages and incents in-fill development.

- B. Results inconsistent with avowed goals of a particular scenario appear in each scenario. For example, the consultants' summary of the highest-rated fourteen indicators to be implemented in scenarios lists "Local jobs-housing balance (near 1.0)" as the number one goal. Nevertheless, one of the scenarios – Hometowns – actually increases the concentration of jobs in the eastern portion of Ada County. Avoiding floodplains for new development is the most important land use criterion in two of the scenarios – Active Corridors and Outdoor Playground. Nevertheless, both place a good deal of new growth directly in floodplains. Other indicators highlighted as among the eight most important have similar implementation failures in the scenarios themselves.
- C. Reliance on significant new investment in public transportation is a key component of three scenarios: Active Corridors ("light rail"); Hometowns ("high capacity transit corridors"); and Town & Country ("light rail"). The City of Nampa lauds Valley Regional Transit's efforts to establish truly meaningful public transportation services throughout the Treasure Valley. The City has and will continue its active support for finding a funding mechanism to make that vision a reality. Nevertheless, viewing this issue over more than two decades at the Idaho Legislature leads inexorably to the

conclusion that no funding mechanism is likely to appear in the life of CIM2040. Indeed, the draft financial plan for CIM2040 does not include any revenue source sufficient in magnitude to implement either light rail or high-capacity transit corridors. This reality will not prevent the City of Nampa from implementing its Comp Plan intention to densify housing along currently-defined transit corridors. It will likely prevent us, however, from reaping the benefits of reduced congestion, fewer roads to be constructed, etc. This caveat should, in the City's view, become a part of all three scenarios, perhaps to the extent of having a "with" and "without" version of each.

- D. Too little effort seems to have been expended in validating proposed scenarios with real-life data.
- a. Consider, for example, that the City's ratio of multi-family residential permits compared to single family residential permits has averaged less than 19% since 2001. Three of the four scenarios (Active Corridors, Outdoor Playground and Town & Country) assume this ratio will dramatically increase to between 31 and 51% annually for the next three decades. This kind of fundamental shift is extremely unlikely to happen. One would expect that historic trends for significant indicators, such as persons per household, would temper the enthusiasm for dramatic change.
 - b. A comparable example – persons per household – ignores the last two census results (Nampa's PPH > 2.7) and assumes that the number of persons per household will dramatically decrease in all four scenarios to between 2.05 and 2.24.
 - c. As a last example, it appears that existing entitlements have been ignored throughout all four scenarios.

Recommendations

1. Establish 2040 population and household goals for the City of Nampa per the Hometowns scenario. These demographics most closely approximate existing City forecasts extended to 2040.
2. Establish 2040 jobs goals per either the Active Corridors or Outdoor Playground scenario for the same reason.
3. Abide by the City's Comprehensive Plan as the basis for distributing this growth.
4. Acknowledge the failed history regarding attempts to establish an on-going funding mechanism for public transportation. Delete all scenario references to and reliance upon high capacity transit corridors and light rail in CIM2040 until and unless such funds become available and are justified in the CIM2040 financial analysis.
5. "Ground-check" all future efforts to revise the existing scenarios or create a preferred scenario. This check should be made taking into account Comprehensive Plans, historic

trends, existing entitlements, environmentally sensitive areas, and other similar data. The credibility of future scenario(s) can only be established in this way.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom Dale". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "T" and a long, sweeping underline.

Tom Dale, Mayor
City of Nampa