

COMMUNITY PLANNING: A TOOL FOR CONSERVATION

Hailey, Idaho – May 22, 2024 – The Wood River Land Trust announces a new program dedicated to managing growth for conservation: Community Planning. Working with the local jurisdictions, the new program will engage the community in how land use planning affects conservation goals— both within the footprint of development and at its intersection with open space. Through consensus building, we can build capacity to steward a more livable future.

The program's five focus areas— habitat conservation, water availability, transportation mobility, community housing, and livability— are distinct yet complementary to each other. Zoning for different land uses and housing types, for example, affects transportation mode choice as well as use of natural resources like water. Markets driven by housing demands and hamstrung by low density zoning encourages sprawling development that compromises conservation. Whether people can enjoy a bike ride to work or a child can safely cross Main Street on foot affects the quality of a place, including the livability of a community. All five focus areas are connected. They all influence the design and feel of our community, they influence the potential of conservation.

Working within the parameters of overlapping policy statements and goals shared between the local governments, the Land Trust's new Community Planning program will build capacity behind the ongoing sustainability and smart growth efforts of its partners in local government. "Regional coordination is happening successfully, up and down the valley in a variety of realms," says Community Planning Director, Cece Osborn. "The new program will help show community members where and how that is happening. Plus, what they can do to help."

Added community engagement and education will coalesce those who are dedicated to the quality of the natural environment and life in the community— active citizens, engaged philanthropists, partner organizations, and our leaders in local government. Working together, we are better positioned to manage growth, discourage sprawling development, and protect our cherished landscape.

"Community planning is another tool in our box, to manage growth in a way that furthers local conservation efforts," says Executive Director Amy Trujillo. "Planning decisions shape a community. Planning influences whether a community's design and development patterns will threaten or protect healthy open spaces, in turn affecting the quality of life for the people in it."

For more information contact Cece Osborne, Community Planning Director,
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Sign up for information sessions and learn more about the new Community Planning program on the Wood River Land Trust's website:

<https://www.woodriverlandtrust.org/community-planning>

The Wood River Land Trust is a nonprofit organization dedicated to conserving and protecting land and water in the Wood River Valley and south central Idaho. Since its inception, the land trust has worked to safeguard natural resources, open spaces, and recreational areas for the benefit of the community and future generations. www.woodriverlandtrust.org

