

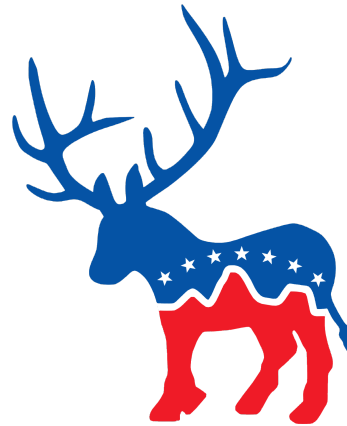
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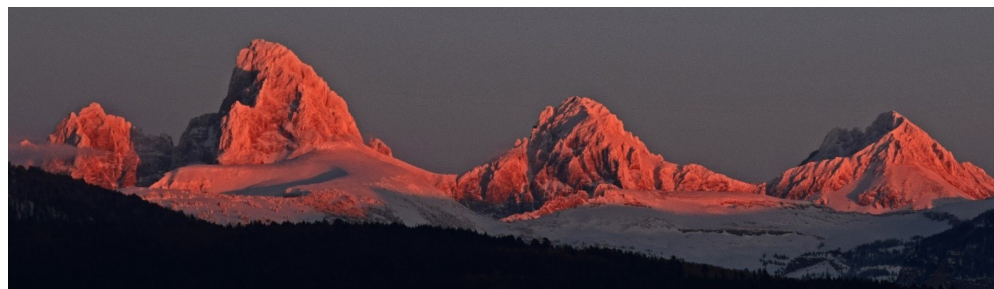
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Teton County Democratic Party Monthly Newsletter Volume II, Issue 2



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A Word From the Chair

Jan Betts, Teton County Democratic Party Chair

Hello Friends,

We've taken a bit of a break to enjoy this good old fashioned snowy winter. Hope you have enjoyed it as much as most of us have. That said our County Commissioners have been hard at work helping address many of your concerns. Meanwhile, the extreme right members in the Idaho Legislature with bills to further their far-right agenda.



That brings us to the topics covered in this newsletter.

First, Commissioner Bob Heneage is going to explain the next step in the county planning process which is to update the Areas of Impact in our county.

Second, Ralph Mossman, is sharing some thoughts on what we can do to help contest the far-right agenda being pursued in Boise during this legislative session.

I know I don't need to remind anyone, since it seems to be an all too familiar occurrence, about the epidemic of gun violence that has taken over our country even as close by as our neighboring county last year. This is everyone's problem to solve. We may be in the minority in this state but our voices still need to be heard. Please let your state and federal elected officials know that it is time for more than thoughts and prayers!

Next time you hear from us, hopefully there will be green grass and flowers blooming outside your window!

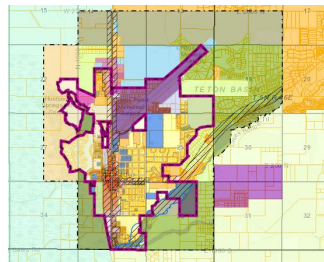
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Areas of Impact—The Next Step in Completing Teton Valley's Planning and Zoning

Picture

Bob Heneage, Teton County Commissioner

Each of Teton Valley's three cities, Driggs, Victor and Teton, are currently due to renegotiate their Area of City Impact (AOI) agreements with Teton County. This effort will include new definition and boundaries of the land to be included in the AOI's as well as



reconsideration of the zoning systems to be applied. The county's standing agreements with the three cities are all over a decade old—those governing the Driggs and Victor AOI's both date from 2011, while the Teton AOI agreement dates from 1995.

In Idaho, AOI's are roughly doughnut-shaped geographical areas into which cities are expected to grow and annex land at some future point in time. Idaho Code requires all cities to define their AOI's with their respective counties. Besides defining the geographic areas for anticipated urban growth, an AOI also includes an agreement between a city and county on which plans, policies, development standards and zoning will apply. AOI's provide a way for cities, counties, utility providers, and other public entities to plan together for how to handle future city growth and prevent sprawl.

Because of this imposed statutory AOI structure, our valley actually contains seven different distinct zoning systems governing land division and development. The first three of these are comprised of the individual city land codes of Driggs, Victor and Teton, which are in turn made up of mostly smaller urban parcels and zoning districts. The next three systems include the three surrounding AOI's, comprised of county land bound by negotiated limits and which contains transitional zoning. The seventh and final zoning system governs the rural part of Teton Valley outside the cities and AOI's, which is the area

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The existing city AOI's are quite large, comprising multiple square miles in each case. Victor and Teton's current agreements apply county zoning to their individual AOI's and still use 2.5-acre and 20-acre density assignments. Driggs, on the other hand, has extended its own city zoning throughout its AOI. This has been applied in a fairly complex layout and ranges in size down to 0.16-acre city-sized parcels. For the most part, the properties in all three cities' AOI's use only individual wells and septic systems.

The Idaho legislature is currently in the process of rewriting the state statute governing Areas of City Impact. The latest draft of SB-1073, relating to AOI's and annexations, redefines the criteria for impact area boundary decisions. The Senate draft establishes a one-mile distance standard from city limits and a five-year regular planning limit for boundary modifications. It clarifies language to define AOI's as only those lands likely to be annexed by a city "in the near future" rather than the previously worded "at some future time." If the statute is adopted in its current form, all three Teton Valley AOI's will likely shrink back from their current extents and become far more compact. Parcels that revert to rural county zoning will need to be reconsidered by the county, while those parcels that remain within the revised AOI's will be subject to new city-county negotiations.

Renegotiating the valley's AOI's will begin soon after the expected new legislation is adopted. As city-county draft agreements are developed, they will be made available to the public on the county's website. Public comments will be taken through the website as well as through public open houses. The three new agreements will be revised based on feedback from the public. After joint drafts are developed, the Planning and Zoning Commission for each jurisdiction will conduct a public hearing and provide a recommendation to their respective governing board, who then will make the final decision. The governing board may also conduct a public hearing. Two ordinances must then be adopted by each jurisdiction: (1) a map of the revised AOI; and (2) an ordinance identifying the comprehensive plan and development regulations for the area identified on the map.

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The immanent changes to our valley Areas of Impact present new challenges and opportunities to collectively reconsider and re-determine how we want our local urban/rural transitions to feel. Do we want the cities to have hard edges or do we want them to transition to surrounding countryside in a smooth gradient? Do we want a hard urban edge in some locations and a gradient in others? Is city zoning appropriate for areas that do not yet have city services? Is it fair to impose a city's controls on owners that can't vote in city elections? Are there other considerations that should be evaluated?

When the valley's Area of Impact renegotiations and drafting processes get underway later this year, please participate and provide your input!

How to fight Idaho's Drift Into Christian Nationalism

Ralph Mossman, Legislative District 35 Chair

One doesn't have to pay too much attention to what is happening in the State of Idaho to see that we are not just drifting to the right, but sprinting towards an Idaho in which the Republican Super-Majority Legislature has the ultimate say over our bodies, our books, our children and more.



What is happening is that a Super-majority wields so much power that it is almost like other out-of-control phenomenon in which it lurches from side to side in an unpredictable and often damaging rampage. On a good day, the Legislature relies on the votes from Democrats to bring it back to center, but on a bad day the ultra-right-wing Christian Nationalist crazies veer the Legislature over the edge. Then the Governor is faced with having authority to veto bad legislation, but he is also wary of the power that threatens him as well.

So, what can we in Teton County do to help? The good news is that we can help, and even

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worthy of the scenery.

Idaho Democratic Party (IDP) – The IDP is the largest organization working to affect change in Idaho. The IDP does everything from putting on a huge variety of workshops and trainings to supporting County Parties. The work they do to change the Legislature involves creating and supporting local parties and training candidates at all levels. The IDP also helps support the IDLCC mentioned below. If you can, please support the IDP with a monthly Dem (Donate Every Month) donation. \$5 per month is amazingly helpful.

Idahodems.org is the website. Contribute monthly or one time at

https://secure.actblue.com/donate/dem-club_2021

Idaho Democratic Legislative Campaign Committee (IDLCC) – The IDLCC is the **ONLY** organization dedicated to electing more Democrats to the legislature. They do this by aggressively searching for, training, and supporting Legislative candidates. They are extremely careful in how they use our contributions, and they only have one staff person, with most of the work being done by the Legislators themselves. They are very effective and really need our help!

<https://idahodlcc.org/>

<https://secure.actblue.com/donate/idlcc2022>

There are many organizations from Planned Parenthood and the ACLU and Idaho Conservation Voters and many, many others, but it is worth calling out Reclaim Idaho as an organization that is extremely focused on making small incremental changes through Ballot Initiatives that are huge in impact.

Important Dates

- **September 8, 2023:** Last day to file to run for Driggs City Council
- **November 7, 2023:** General election

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