

THE CITY OF MURTAUGH

*“A Better Tomorrow”*

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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## **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

The Comprehensive Plan will allow Murtaugh to implement the proper land and use decisions concerning the type and quality of services that will aid in the community's continued growth and economic development.

The Comprehensive Plan is a document that can be used by Murtaugh to guide local community decision makers through a series of goals, and the plans and policies necessary to reach those goals. The Plan will describe the present community and the desired future growth by the use of maps and statements. The Plan sets forth steps established to reach future goals for the community. It also provides direction for land use regulations and other implementation methodologies.

Idaho Code requires the comprehensive Plan to set forth specific elements. These elements are:

- Property Rights
- Population
- Transportation
- Special Sites
- Natural Resources
- Hazardous Areas
- Recreation
- Economic Development
- Housing
- School Facilities
- Land Use
- Public Services
- Community Design
- Implementation

The Comprehensive Plan is to act as an effective guide for the implementation and development of methods to secure proper and maintainable growth while ensuring the goals desired by the Community.

## **HISTORY AND BACKGROUND**

Prior to settlement of the Murtaugh area, it had been a stomping grounds of the Shoshoni Indians. Today, in farming and road construction, Indian artifacts are still being uncovered.

In 1895, Ira Burton Perrine, one of the prominent pioneers of the Magic Valley was asked by the Oregon Short Line Railroad to find a site for a railroad bridge across the Snake River. In his exploration of the river, he came upon a spot call the Cedars where the Snake River began its

descent into a canyon. Mr. Perrine became acquainted with the engineers and minors by selling them fruit and had talked with them about a diversion from the river to create an irrigation system. In 1903, a land sale was held in Shoshone, but only sixteen parcels of land were sold. Interested parties were ready to give up the entire project, but Mr. Perrine insisted on going back East and putting on an extensive advertising program. He formed an investment company and soon sold 50,000 acres which was enough to ensure the access of the Milner Dam project.

Many of the first permanent settlers came to Murtaugh as a result of the opening of the Twin Falls Canal in 1905. Some of these included John L. Silvers, J.M. Emanuel, Andy Hanson, F. Lee Johnson, Frank Weinheimer, J.E. Steinour, W.F. Jacks, F. Ben Jain, Ed True, J.M. Russell, J.I. Tolman, Fred Bacon, George Decker and the Beverlins. Many of these gentlemen also came with wives and families.

In the early days of Murtaugh, the railroad still hadn't reached the town so many of these early settlers had to haul their possessions by team and wagon from the rail stop at Minidoka.

Life on the early tract farms was hard, but the land provided to be productive from the beginning. In 1910, some six week potatoes were sent by the Twin Falls Chamber of Commerce to the Council Bluffs (Iowa) Fruit and Vegetable Exhibit of the Northwestern States where they were awarded blue ribbons.

The first automobile to visit Murtaugh as owned by the Twin Falls Canal Company. It was bright yellow, had a chain drive, and could be seen for miles coming down the dusty roads. J.I. Tolman owned the first automobile in Murtaugh. It was an "E.M.F." Supposedly, the letters stood for the initials of the builder but it didn't take long for the auto to receive the nick name of "every morning fixum". The second car was a Hudson owned by Hyrum Pickett. It was said that it could pass anything by a gas station.

Jack Fuller, a cattle rancher, bought a Dodge. He drove home and when he approached gate to his ranch, he yelled "Whoa" several times, pulled back on the steering wheel, swore and crashed through the gate. It was a common sight to see crashed gates and buggy sheds open on both ends.

Many of the towns served by the Twin Falls Canal were named for officials or financiers of the Canal Company. Murtaugh was no exception. Mark Maurice Murtaugh was appointed general manager of the Twin Falls Land and Water Company in 1904. In 1906, he was instrumental in constructing one of the largest sluiced dams in the world. In 1905, the town became known as Murtaugh. Mr. Murtaugh gave the school \$500 out of the gratitude for having the town named after him.

The settlement was first called Dry Creek. Dry Creek ran through many of the farms of the settlers. Secondly, it was called Lucerne, after a town in Colorado. The soil was good for the growing of Lucerne alfalfa. Thirdly, it was called Filer Butte. As one historian relates: "When the passenger train stopped, people would get off, occasionally thinking there were in Filer, Idaho. Some got back on the train and continued to Filer, others, seeing their mistake, had to stay all night and take the train to Filer the next day." Murtaugh became an Incorporated City on June 27, 1910.

Murtaugh has two buildings on the Historical Register. The building housing The Iron Rail Bar and Grill, and the City Hall, formerly the Methodist Church.

## **GOALS AND POLICIES**

The citizens of Murtaugh desire to maintain the existing high quality of life and enjoy cultural and recreational resources which contribute to the community's livability. The City's goal is to maintain a healthy and growing economy and coordinate with Burley, Kimberly, Hansen, Eden, Hazelton and Twin Falls regarding planning for areas outside of the community to address regional growth and support the City of Murtaugh Comprehensive Plan.

## **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMPONENTS**

### **Population and Economics**

<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2010</u>
114	134	139	115

These figures are derived from census figures. The City's goal is to have a slow, steady growth rate of approximately 2% per year. This will allow the City to make the necessary adjustments as the population and economy expand while still maintaining the small town atmosphere which its residents prize.

### **School Facilities**

Murtaugh is a small rural school in Idaho. The total enrollment, as of October, 2012 is 240. Kindergarten and elementary: 140 students; middle school: 50 students; high school: 80 students. There are three main buildings on campus: A high school/middle school; an elementary school; and a gymnasium complex. Murtaugh High School has graduated students since 1917. There are 40+ employees in the district.

A thorough and challenging curriculum is offered to students Pre-K-12 in an effort to help them meet their future challenges. Technology is used extensively at the elementary, middle school and high school levels. Murtaugh boasts one of the highest ratio of computers to students in the state. Computer services are available to all students. The school has been the recipient of several large grants that have allowed us to have wide resources with the most current technology available at all grade levels.

Students have the opportunity to learn in a small class environment by highly qualified teachers. The average senior graduates with between 20-25 dual credits. The District utilizes teachers certified to teach dual credits and uses the Idaho Education Network to assist them with thee opportunities.

The District has a broad support in the community. The last supplemental levy was passes with 82% approval.

## Economic Development

Murtaugh is a small community but has many comforts of a larger town. A local Post Office, Community Building Supply has whatever is needed for farming, building, home repair, hunting and fishing. Iron Rail Bar and Grill furnished food and refreshments. Ward Enterprises makes knobs for vehicles and located along the railroad are Land View Fertilizer, KeyAg, Integrity Blending and Valley Bean and Grain.

It is the desire of the City to continue its current zoning policy of encouraging commercial development along 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Boyd Center Street, Archer Street, the railroad, and Highway 30.

## Public Facilities and Services

### 1. Water Supply and Distribution

Residents in Murtaugh receive their water from one deep well which discharges into a 250,000 water storage tank. Monthly cost for water is \$25.00.

### 2. Wastewater Treatment

The City of Murtaugh utilizes two lagoons and two evaporating ponds for wastewater treatment. A new lagoon and major upkeep was completed in 2012 to meet DEQ requirements. Monthly cost for a typical residential user is \$48.94.

### 3. Public Safety and Medical

The City is a member of the Rock Creek Rural Fire Protection District and has thirty five to forty volunteer firemen throughout the district. The Fire Department is housed in a facility on Boyd Street and has three fire trucks.

The school has a part time resource officer at the school 3 days per week.

Murtaugh has a Quick Response Unit that works in conjunction with Hansen. The nearest hospitals are in Twin Falls and Burley, both about 20 miles away.

### 4. Utilities

Electrical power is supplied by the Idaho Power Company.

The City has an auxiliary power system available for the supply and distribution of water.

Telephone service is provided by Century Link.

Natural gas is supplied by Intermountain Gas Company.

### Hazardous Areas

Due to the variety of industrial and agricultural uses, some potentially hazardous sites exist within the City and Area of Impact. These include railroad tracks, grain storage areas, industrial material, chemicals and fertilizer storage areas, various underground storage tanks, drain ponds and irrigation ditches, damaged or abandoned buildings, Murtaugh Lake and Snake River Waterway. The City will, when necessary, act to control the location or use of such areas. The city will informally or formally monitor potentially hazardous areas to assure the continue health of the human and natural environment with the City and Impact Area. The City of Murtaugh will, whenever possible, work with industry and agriculture to assure that potentially hazardous areas are manage in such a way as to reduce the risk to residents.

### Transportation

Murtaugh is located approximately 20 miles east of Twin Falls and 21 miles west of Burley. Major access to Murtaugh is gained from State Highway 30. Access from I-84 is gained via State Highway 30 through Kimberly or Burley or by Valley Road north to I-84.

The Murtaugh Highway District maintains the country roads approximately three miles west of Artesian Road, south to the foothills, north to the Snake River, and east to the Cassia County line. Local funds are used to maintain the upgrade Murtaugh's roadway system.

The Eastern Idaho Railroad, headquartered in Twin Falls, owns and operates the line that runs through Murtaugh. An average of two trains travel through per day, one running each way with spur tracks available for industries.

### Land Use

The City of Murtaugh encompasses approximately 71 acres. The Future Land Use designations and definitions for said future land uses (which shall guide the City into the future) are as follows; and the colors that appear next to the following definitions are the same as the colors used on the Future Land Use Map (Exhibit A):

#### Land Use Definitions

The colors listed next to the following definitions are the associated colors within the Future Land Use Map.

**Agricultural**



The purpose of the Agricultural designation is to encourage rural living, preserve lands for generating plant crops, housing livestock, and producing other natural resources.

**Area of Critical Concern**



The purpose of the Area of Critical Concern designation is to protect the area from the canyon rim to the river around the Snake River and Dry Creek corridors within the community.

**Low Density Residential**



The purpose of the Low Density Residential designation is to accommodate larger lot living, with single-family residential uses and occasionally a mix of single-family and multi-family uses, serving as a transitional zone between more intense and agricultural uses.

**Medium Density Residential**



The purpose of the Medium Density Residential designation is to accommodate medium-sized lot living, with single-family residential uses and/or a mix of single-family and multi-family uses.

**Mixed Use**



The purpose of the Mixed Use designation is to encourage a mix of residential uses (single-family and multi-family), or a mix of residential and commercial uses. This designation can also serve as a transitional buffer between land uses, and/or accommodate a larger mixed-use development.

**Commercial**



The purpose of the Commercial designation is for commercial or service establishments in the city's downtown core, along major roads, or other areas with convenient access to meet the needs of the community.

**Industrial**



The purpose of the Industrial designation is to accommodate establishments, warehouses, and facilities for distribution or storage services, and for activities involving materials and goods, processing, production, packaging, etc.

**Housing**

The 1980 census listed 47 homes in Murtaugh with a population of 114. The 1990 census listed 45 homes with a population of 134. The 2000 census listed 49 homes with a population 139. The 2010 census listed 115 people and 43 homes.

The City has adopted a firm Zoning Ordinance and Building Code to assure that the current housing is at a minimum, kept to acceptable levels. Building codes will be utilized to improve the quality of existing homes when necessary.

## Recreation. Parks and Special Sites

The City of Murtaugh is located in an area which is accessible to many and carried recreational enjoyments. Ten to twenty miles south, the "South Hills" are noted for hunting, fishing, camping, snowmobiling, skiing, excellent scenery and hiking. Magic Mountain and Pomerelle Ski Lodges provide excellent facilities for Nordic and Alpine skiing. The Forest Service provides many fireplaces, picnic sites, campgrounds and supervised winter sport sites in the same areas.

Murtaugh has one city park which consists of approximately five acres. This park has recreational equipment and a baseball diamond for the use by the community at large. It is a popular facility that is actively used.

Located within a short driving distance of Murtaugh are Murtaugh Lake and Milner Dam public parks. The Milner Dam is located twelve miles east of Murtaugh. Facilities include restrooms, boat ramps, docks and picnic sites.

Construction of the Milner Dam project was initiated in 1903 and completed in November 1904. Extension of canals and laterals to the west and the completion of the system to conform to the contract with the state continued until 1909.

Murtaugh Lake Parks are located approximately two miles south of Murtaugh. The lake was built in 1905 for storage of irrigation water. It is used extensively by sportsmen and boaters for recreation.

Both Murtaugh Lake and Milner Dam are operated by the Twin Falls Canal Company. Recreational areas are operated by Twin Falls County Parks and Recreation Department and the State of Idaho.

Caldron Linn is located directly to the North and East of Murtaugh in a challenging and enjoyable stretch of the Snake River suitable for kayakers. This is a major resource of Murtaugh and should be protected and promoted as such. Some sections of the Snake River through Murtaugh are also suitable for whitewater rafting operated by commercial outfitters. Class II, III, IV and V rapids offer opportunities for enjoyment for many tourists.

In 1811, the Hunt expedition party likened the terrific torrent of the Snake River just North of Murtaugh to a boiling caldron, adding the old Scottish work "linn" which means waterfalls. They had just lost a man and a canoe in a roaring chute upstream. Finding worse water ahead at Caldron Linn, they abandoned the river travel. The next year, another explorer said of Caldron Linn, "it's terrific appearance beggars all description."

## Private Property Rights

The City of Murtaugh will act to insure that land use policies, restrictions, conditions and create fees do not violate private property rights, adversely impact private property values, or unnecessary technical limitations upon the use of the property which would constitute an unconstitutional taking of private property.

In order to evaluate each relation action, the City will ask the following questions of the actions:

1. Does the regulations or action result in the permanent or temporary physical occupation of the property?
2. Does the regulation or action require a property owner to dedicate a portion of property or grant an easement?
3. Does the regulation deprive the owner of all economically viable uses of the property?
4. Does the regulation have a significant impact on the landowner's economic interest?
5. Does the regulation deny a fundamental attribute or ownership?
6. Does the regulation serve the same purpose that would be served by directly prohibiting the use or action, and does the condition imposed substantially advanced that purpose?
7. Property owners, recognizing they are only temporary stewards of the land, shall preserve and maintain their property for the benefit of future generation.

