**Blaine County Comprehensive Plan – Public Airport Facilities**

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Vision To provide Public Airport Facilities that are safe, efficient, reliable, and adaptable, to best serve Blaine County residents and visitors.

Key Guiding Principle

Integrated, multi-modal transportation is necessary to maintain and enhance our quality of life. Our transportation system will provide excellent mobility for citizens, visitors and the workforce. A network of integrated roads, transit routes, public airport facilities, and pathways will ensure a safe and efficient system for all users, including vehicle drivers, transit riders, air travelers, pedestrians and bicyclists. Multi-modal transportation helps to mitigate traffic and supports our economy.

Setting

This chapter addresses public airport facilities in Blaine County including the principles, goals and policies to be used in the siting, planning, operation and management of present and future facilities. This Section provides guidance for implementing the community’s goals by ordinance for the benefit of residents and visitors. While this Section applies to public airport facilities in Blaine County, it gives special attention to the existing Friedman Memorial Airport site including a future potential relocated replacement airport capable of accommodating both commercial air carrier service and general aviation aircraft.
Public Airport Overview

There are currently six (6) public-use airport in Blaine County. According to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and Idaho Transportation Department – Division of Aeronautics (ITD Aero), a public-use airport is open to and for public use without prior permission, and without restrictions within the physical capabilities of available facilities.

The three primary public-use airports in Blaine County include:
- Carey Airport (U65), Carey, ID. Owned by the City of Carey.
- Smiley Creek Airport (U87), Galena, ID. Owned by the State of Idaho – ITD Aero.
- Friedman Memorial Airport (SUN), Hailey, ID. Owned by Blaine County and the City of Hailey.

There are also three ITD Aero owned airstrips located in the County that are part of the ITD Aero Idaho Airstrip Network. These are the Cox’s Well, Hollow Top and Bear Trap airstrips -- all located on or surrounded by Bureau of Land Management land in the Craters of the Moon area. Hollow Top and Bear Trap operate as public use airports under an agreement between ITD Aero and the BLM. All three airstrips are very low activity, essentially serving as emergency airstrips only.

Map 1A.1 shows the locations of all public-use airports.

Photo credit - Chris Pomeroy/Friedman Memorial Airport
A state’s public-use airport system typically consists of two types of airports; those that are recognized by the FAA as part of the national airport system, and those that are not. Public-use airports recognized by the FAA are included in the FAA’s National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS). Per the FAA, “NPIAS airports are considered necessary to provide a safe, efficient, and integrated system of nation-wide public-use airports adequate to anticipate and meet the needs of commercial air service; civil aeronautics; the national defense requirements of the Secretary of Defense; emergency air medical evacuation; BLM and USFS fire response support as well as the United States Postal Service” (FAA NPIAS Report 2019-2023). NPIAS designation also means the airport is eligible for FAA Airport Improvement Program funds, and is subject to FAA airport design standards, regulations, rules, sponsor obligations, and grant assurances.

Non-NPIAS airports still contribute to the aviation system; however, their contribution is typically limited to the local and state level. Non-NPIAS airports are not eligible for FAA Airport Improvement Program funds, nor are they bound by the same federal regulatory requirements as NPIAS airports with one notable exception. Federally defined airspace protection surfaces as defined in 14 CFR Part 77 are also applicable to non-NPIAS public use airports. Many of Idaho’s non-NPIAS are eligible for ITD Aero’s Idaho Airport Aid Program for airport capital improvement grants and are also subject to ITD Aero state airport design standards, rules, and sponsor obligations, and grant assurances.

The Idaho Airport System Plan (IASP), developed by ITD Aero, identifies both NPIAS and non-NPIAS airports that make-up a core system of public-use airports in Idaho. Of the three public-use airports in Blaine County, only the Friedman Memorial Airport is a NPIAS airport. The Carey and Smiley Creek Airports are not included in the FAA NPIAS. All three airports are included in the ITD Aero’s IASP and are considered core airports in the State of Idaho’s public-use airport system.

**Private Airports/Heliports**

There are several private use airports and heliports in the county. Private use facilities are available for use only by the owner or persons authorized by the owner. The more notable private use airports/heliports in the county include the Picabo Airport (Picabo), Sluder Airstrip (Bellevue), and St. Luke’s Wood River Medical Center (heliport – Ketchum). A helipad at the Sawtooth National Recreation Area headquarters is also utilized if needed by the US Forest Service. The airstrip at West Magic is registered in Camas County, though a portion of each of the two runways extend into Blaine County.
Blaine County Public Airport Facilities

Following is a general summary of each primary public-use airport in Blaine County. While public-use airports, the combination of their low activity and location on or near BLM land, the three emergency airstrips discussed above do not warrant further discussion in this section, as they do not contribute to the economy or significantly impact the state aviation system.

Carey Airport (U65)

The Carey Airport is a public use General Aviation airport located in Carey. The airport is owned and operated by the City of Carey.

The airport has a single turf runway 2,650 ft. long by 170 ft. wide. The airport accommodates approximately 3,000 operations (take-offs and landings) annually and is home to six single engine aircraft.

The Carey Airport is not included in the FAA’s NPIAS but is recognized as a General category airport in ITD Aero’s 2019 IASP Update. General airports serve a supplemental role in regional economics and primarily serve local communities.

According to ITD Aero, General category airports support a variety of GA activities including smaller business, recreational, and personal flying. General airports typically have moderate to low levels of activity, primarily by single-engine aircraft and few or no jet and multipropeller aircraft.

The airport serves as an important base of operations for aerial wildland firefighting aircraft including Single Engine Air Tankers (SEAT) and helicopters. The airport also supports significant life flight helicopter activity.

Lastly, the airport is used extensively for student pilot training on grass strips.

The Carey Airport is eligible for ITD Aero’s Idaho Airport Aid Program for airport capital improvement grants and is also subject to ITD Aero’s state airport design standards, rules, and sponsor obligations and grant assurances.

Photo credit - Mike Kelsey - Carey Airport Manager
Smiley Creek Airport (U87)

The Smiley Creek Airport is a public use General Aviation airport located adjacent to the unincorporated village of Sawtooth City. The airport is owned and operated by the Idaho Transportation Department – Division of Aeronautics.

The airport has a single turf runway 4,900 ft. long by 150 ft. wide. The airport accommodates approximately 5,100 annual operations (take-offs and landings). As a backcountry destination, the airport does not have any based aircraft.¹

The Smiley Creek Airport is not included in the FAA’s NPIAS but is recognized as a Backcountry category airport in ITD Aero’s 2019 IASP Update. These airports have limited activity with no jet activity, but play a significant role in supporting mobility, access, and safety and security in rural areas of the state.

The airport is used extensively for recreational backcountry flying in the summer. The airport has served as an important base of operations for aerial wildland firefighting aircraft including Single Engine Air Tankers (SEAT) and helicopters. The airport also supports life flight helicopter activity.

Smiley Creek Airport, as an ITD Aero owned airport, is subject to separate, internal ITD Aero design standards, funding, regulations, and rules.

¹ Photo credit - Blaine County
Friedman Memorial Airport (SUN)

SUN is a public-use Commercial Service Airport located in Hailey. The airport is co-owned and operated by Blaine County and the City of Hailey. The Airport is governed by the Friedman Memorial Airport Authority (FMAA) Board under a Joint Powers Agreement. The Board is comprised of three representatives appointed by the Blaine County Board of Commissioners, three appointed by the City of Hailey, and a seventh member unanimously agreed upon by the six appointed members. The Airport Manager provides the primary staff support to FMAA, managing and supervising airport personnel, and maintaining a safe, legal, efficient, and profitable operation.

The airport has a single asphalt runway 7,550 ft. long by 100 ft. wide. The airport accommodates approximately 26,000 annual operations. It is home to approximately 156 based aircraft including single engine, multi-engine, jet aircraft, and helicopters. The airport encompasses 209 acres and is located 5,320 feet above mean sea level.

As of 2019, SUN provides commercial air service connectivity to six (6) non-stop markets including Chicago, Denver, Los Angeles, Seattle, Salt Lake City, and San Francisco. Air service in 2019 is provided by Alaska Airlines (operated by Horizon), Delta Airlines (operated by SkyWest Airlines), and United Airlines (operated by SkyWest Airlines). Service to Chicago, Denver, Los Angeles, Seattle, and San Francisco is seasonal, with Salt Lake City service on Delta Airlines being the only year-round service. In addition to commercial air service at the airport, there is substantial high-end corporate business jet activity and recreational flying.

SUN is included in the NPIAS as a primary, non-hub Commercial Service Airport. As a NPIAS airport, SUN receives federal funding via the FAA Airport Improvement Program and is subject to FAA airport design standards, regulations, rules, sponsor obligations, and grant assurances. SUN is also included in ITD Aero’s IASP and considered a core Commercial Service Airport in the State of Idaho’s public-use airport system. SUN is eligible for ITD Aero’s Idaho Airport Aid Program for airport capital improvement grants and is also subject to ITD Aero sponsor obligations and grant assurances. Based on the importance and significance of Friedman Memorial Airport as Blaine County’s only county owned public-use airport, additional information and discussion about the airport is included below. The following airport history, and potential airport replacement discussion is all extracted from the 2018 Airport Master Plan, which was started in 2014 and completed in 2018.

Friedman Memorial Airport History at Existing Site

In 1931, the Friedman family deeded a portion of their land to the City of Hailey for use as an airport, with the condition that, if the land should ever cease to be used as an airport, the property would revert back to the Friedman heirs. In the years since, the Airport has expanded and grown its facilities and traffic through investment from the City of Hailey, Blaine County, the State of Idaho, and the FAA. Commercial passenger service at the Airport began in 1960, and since then passenger service has thrived. In 1994, the FMAA was formed, replacing the Blaine County Airport Commission.

1 Additional details and information can be found in the 2018 Airport Master Plan narrative report located at the airport management office and online at www.iflysun.com.
The Airport faces numerous design and reliability constraints at its existing site, including but not limited to non-compliance with full FAA design standards related to size of aircraft operating at the airport; surrounding mountainous terrain that limits aircraft approaches and departures; and an Airport property footprint that restricts its ability to meet potential long-term needs. For several decades, the FMAA has evaluated the limitations of the current Airport site and explored the potential need to replace the Airport at an alternate site that poses fewer constraints.

In 2005, the United States Congress passed a law that states “not later than December 31, 2015, the owner and operator of an airport certificated under 49 U.S.C. 44706 shall improve the airport’s runway safety areas to comply with the Federal Aviation Administration design standards required by 14 CFR Part 139.” Partially because the runway safety area (RSA) at the Airport does not meet FAA design standards, the FMAA has spent the last decade developing actionable plans for meeting the safety area standard, either at the existing site or an alternate site.
Modification of Airport Design Standards (MOS) were approved by the FAA in November 2013, stipulating specific airfield improvements while imposing restrictions on aircraft types and operating procedures. The stipulations included a limit of airport use to aircraft less than 95,000 pounds gross weight, and with wingspans less than 100 feet (unless an FAA-approved operational procedure is put into place to mitigate impacts related to wingspans greater than 100 feet).

An Airport Master Plan completed in 2004 resulted in the FMAA approving a study for determining alternative airport locations and possible new airport sites. In 2006, a Site Selection and Feasibility Study concluded that the current airport site was no longer a viable option for future airport operations. Based on the results of these and previous planning studies, the FAA issued a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for a Replacement Airport near Hailey, ID, in November 2007. As of August 2011, the FAA suspended indefinitely any further work on the EIS, citing increased anticipated costs of the project and potential impacts to wildlife.

Following suspension of the replacement airport EIS process in 2011, FMAA led an 18-month public process to determine the appropriate path forward for the airport. In January 2013, Airport Alternatives Technical Analysis, Alternative 6, Less Than Full Compliance – No Land Acquisition was selected as the path forward for achieving temporary compliance with FAA standards at the existing site.

The public process from the Site Selection and Feasibility Study and suspended EIS, resulted in the adoption of future “dual path” Airport facility planning by FMAA. This “dual path” approach is focused on satisfying the operational requirements of existing and potential future airport users, whether at the existing Airport site or at a replacement site.

SUN Replacement Airport
Over the years, FMAA has undertaken significant steps to operate and maintain a safe and efficient aviation facility. However, the significant limitations at the current airport site are clear, and their impact has been fully studied and documented in numerous analyses conducted over many years, starting in 1976. These analyses found that the long-term viability of the existing airport site is questionable; therefore, the FMAA should identify future possible replacement sites, for when the time comes to relocate the Airport. The 1983 Airport Master Plan first studied replacement airport sites, and then the more recent 2004 Master Plan Update, 2006 Feasibility Study, and the 2008 EIS Phase I Plan of Study re-evaluated the sites.

These two studies, summarized in the Appendix, contain the most recent documentation of potential replacement sites for the Airport:

- Feasibility Study (2006)
- EIS Phase I Plan of Study (2008)

Since the suspension of the EIS in 2011 and completion of the $35 million Runway Safety Area project at the end of calendar year 2015, the Friedman Memorial Airport has been successfully operating in its current configuration with the FAA approved Modification to Standards. It is expected the airport will continue to operate in its existing location and configuration for many years to come. That said, FMAA’s current “dual path” to meet demand at the existing site while looking ahead to a potential replacement site when demand at the existing site cannot be met is still valid. It should be noted that there is a risk that the FAA could discontinue allowance of the current approved Modifications to Standards thereby forcing FMAA and the community to once again act on finding a suitable relocation site.

For purpose of this Comprehensive Plan update, acknowledgement of the need to plan for a potential future replacement site is included.
How Airports Impact Our County

Blaine County’s primary public-use airport facilities are an important part of our local and regional transportation infrastructure. They impact, or have the potential to impact, our community in both positive and negative ways. State of Idaho Code, Title 67, Chapter 65, Local Land Use Planning, specifically recognizes airports as Essential Community Facilities. This designation promotes the health, safety and general welfare of the people of the state of Idaho by “protecting public airports as essential community facilities that provide safe transportation alternatives and contribute to the economy of the state.” Planning for existing and potential future airport facilities should be mindful of both impacts and contributions. Following is a brief summary of tourism, economic, transportation and quality of life impacts resulting from the current public airport facilities in the County.

Tourism and Economic Impacts

Air Service at the Friedman Memorial Airport is critical to sustaining the regional economy, particularly the resort economy. Blaine County’s regional economic development organization, Sun Valley Economic Development, estimates that visitors and residents traveling by air account for approximately 30% of the Blaine County economy. For over ten years, the nonprofit organization Fly Sun Valley Alliance has worked to improve air service to Friedman Memorial Airport. The group includes county, city, airport, resort and business representatives. In 2013 and 2017, voters in Ketchum, Sun Valley and Hailey approved an additional 1% local option tax (LOT) dedicated to supporting air service development and related marketing. Since 2008, Fly Sun Valley Alliance (FSVA) has been successful in securing several new non-stop markets as highlighted above. Between 2010 and 2018, the Friedman Memorial Airport saw an approximate 75% increase in passenger enplanements as a result of the successes of FSVA and the community in securing new flights.

The Friedman Memorial Airport serves a substantial amount of high-end corporate jet activity and recreational use which contribute significantly to the regional and resort economies.

All three primary public-use airports in Blaine County contribute to the local, regional, and state economy. ITD Aero recently released new Airport Economic Impacts Analysis as part of the IASP. The economic output results include jobs, earnings, and gross domestic product (GDP). Impacts are derived from operational (including administration and business tenants), visitor spending (both commercial service and general aviation), and capital improvements components. A summary of each airport’s annual economic contribution is as follows:

Carey Airport Economic Impact

According to the 2019 ITD Aero Airport Economic Impact Analysis as part of the IASP, the Carey Airport contributes over $966,000 of annual economic impact to the local, regional and state economy based on the general aviation activity at the airport.

Smiley Creek Airport Economic Impact

According to the 2019 ITD Aero Airport Economic Impact Analysis as part of the IASP, the Smiley Creek Airport contributes over $193,000 of annual economic impact to the local, regional and state economy based on the general aviation activity at the airport.
Friedman Memorial Airport Economic Impact

According to the 2019 ITD Aero Airport Economic Impact Analysis as part of the IASP, the Friedman Memorial Airport contributes over $305 million of annual economic impact to the local, regional and state economy resulting from commercial air service and general aviation activity at the airport. This substantial economic impact ranks second for commercial service airports in Idaho, behind the number one ranked Boise Airport.

Transportation and Critical Services Access

Blaine County is considered one of the most populated remote counties in Idaho. Limited roadway access into and out of the County means the public airport facilities in the county provide a critical transportation link to Blaine County and the region. All three public-use airports also provide access for other critical services including aerial wildland firefighting aircraft and life flight services when needed.

Noise, Safety, and Quality of Life Impacts

In addition to the positive benefits an airport brings to a community, there are resulting negative impacts from airport operations including, noise, dust, fumes, and potential safety considerations for both aircraft operators and airport neighbors. This especially true for the communities of Hailey and Bellevue. Understanding the operational and regulatory requirements placed upon airports by the FAA and state is critical to reducing negative impacts to both airport users and neighbors when planning.
**Challenges**

General challenges to consider when proactively planning around airports are included below. Special emphasis is placed on Friedman Memorial Airport as the only County owned and operated public-use airport facility.

**Encroachment of incompatible development**

One of the greatest threats to the viability airports today is the encroachment of incompatible land use. More recently, ITD Aero and FAA have been working with Idaho’s airports to strengthen airport land use compatibility policies and practices. Encroaching incompatible land use poses a significant threat to the state and national airport system and the communities the airports serve. As a result, airport sponsors, including Blaine County, should be proactive in efforts to address land use compatibility around airports in their jurisdiction and ensure future development will not negatively impact any of the public airport facilities.

**Safety and quality of life**

Proactive planning around the Friedman Memorial Airport, and airports in general, ensures the safety of both aircraft operators and airport neighbors from potential aircraft accidents. It also protects the quality of life of airport neighbors by reducing impacts such as noise, dust and fumes that are associated with airport operations.

**Grant assurances**

The Friedman Memorial Airport receives FAA and ITD Aero grant funds for capital improvement projects. When accepting these funds, Blaine County (and the City of Hailey as co-sponsor) agrees to certain conditions known as Grant Assurances. These include specific requirements that the County and City should protect the airport’s airspace and prevent incompatible land uses through zoning. Failure to do so may result in the FAA and ITD Aero no longer funding the airport if they do not believe the County and City of Hailey have taken reasonable steps to protect the airports from incompatible development. Duration of these grant assurances is a period of 20 years from when the County/City received the last grant.

**Multi-jurisdictional issues**

Three jurisdictions abut Friedman Memorial Airport: Blaine County, Hailey and Bellevue. Blaine County and Hailey are co-owners (and sponsors) of the airport. A major challenge airport owners face when promoting compatible land use is lack of jurisdiction. Airport operations and associated potential impacts (i.e. safety, noise, dust, fumes) extend beyond the physical boundary of airport property. The airport sponsors are liable for adherence to the FAA and ITD Aero grant assurances. In many instances, however, surrounding jurisdictions have control of land in the vicinity of the airport, not the sponsor. If the surrounding jurisdictions do not wish to proactively plan around the airport, they are not required to do so. The City of Bellevue, just south of the FMA, is certainly impacted by airport operations, and their land use decisions could impact the airport and potentially the safety and quality of life of airport neighbors and the traveling public.

Further, neither the FAA nor ITD Aero have jurisdiction over local land use nor do they have any enforcement authority to stop incompatible encroachment. As such, local communities are heavily relied upon and responsible for undertaking local coordination and zoning efforts.

**Protection of local, state and federal investment**

The Friedman Memorial has received substantial financial investment from the FAA and ITD Aero. The Friedman Memorial Airport operates as an Enterprise entity. As such, the airport does not use general taxpayer funds to support the operation of the airport. To this end, the Friedman Memorial Airport Authority, has also invested significant funding into the airport to operate and maintain the facility. Proactive planning around the airport, including zoning, will help ensure the airport is protected and can continue to operate without hindrance.
Maintaining continued economic benefit
As summarized above, the public airport facilities provide an economic benefit to the County and its citizens. Commercial Air Service at the Friedman Memorial Airport is an important and interconnected mode of transportation, critical to sustaining the regional economy, particularly the resort economy. Commercial air service, corporate general aviation, recreational aviation, aerial firefighting, and life flight operators use the airports and contribute to the economy as a result of their use. Protection of these facilities is critical to ensure these users have continued access to our communities. This will provide long-term economic benefits.

Operational constraints
Friedman Memorial Airport currently faces numerous design and reliability constraints due to limited space. These include but are not limited to non-compliance with full FAA design standards related to size of aircraft operating at the airport and an Airport property footprint that restricts its ability to meet potential long-term needs. In addition, historically high instrument approach minimums because of terrain result in reduced reliability and numerous aircraft diversions to Twin Falls and Boise in the winter, impacting both commercial airline passengers and general aviation users. Advancements in aircraft and instrument approach technology are expected to result in better instrument approaches and a reduction in diversions.

Potential Friedman Memorial relocation
It is expected the Friedman Memorial Airport will continue to operate in its existing location and configuration for many years to come. Should the need arise for a relocated airport due to constraints at the existing site or an FAA decision to discontinue allowance of the current approved Modifications to Standards is made, it will require the County to consider site options as well as a change in current County zoning to allow a new airport.

Photo credit - Chris Pomeroy/Friedman Memorial Airport
Desired Outcomes

Desired outcomes are the intended result of our planning efforts. Each desired outcome includes active policy statements that will guide future decision-making.

An airport is designed to meet many needs and provide many services for the community it serves. It is also a neighboring land use. It is important that future decision-making guides the nature and characteristics of development and land uses around the airport so that aviation demand is met, and the airport’s long-term safety, reliability, and viability are assured. At the same time, the decision-making should also consider the impacts of airport operations and development on the community. The Board of County Commissioners has adopted guiding principles for Friedman Memorial Airport (see appendix).

A. Health, Safety, and General Welfare

Desired Outcome

Ensure the health, safety, and general welfare of both Friedman Memorial Airport users and surrounding neighbors.

A-1. Operate, maintain, and develop the airport to ensure safe and efficient aeronautical facilities for all aviation users per local, state, and FAA requirements.
A-2. Operate and develop the airport in such a manner that it remains a safe and good neighbor by minimizing current and potential future negative impacts such as noise, dust and fumes.

**B. Commercial Air Service and General Aviation Services**

*Desired Outcome*

Maintain and improve commercial air service and general aviation services at the Friedman Memorial Airport.

B-1: Continue proactive efforts with the airlines, air service partners (FSVA), and the community to maintain and improve commercial air service options at the airport.

B-2: Continue to maintain and improve airport facilities for general aviation users including corporate and recreational users.

**C. Future Operational and Aeronautical Needs and Facilities**

*Desired Outcome*

Continually monitor and plan for future operations and aeronautical needs of the Friedman Memorial Airport. Planning and development of the airport should continue to provide facilities that support commercial air service and general aviation activity as well as critical services such as aerial firefighting, life flight, and business activities that are valued by the community.

C-1: Continue efforts to improve instrument approach reliability.

C-2: Adhere to the current Airport Master Plan and associated approved Airport Layout Plan as updated.

C-3: Update the Airport Master Plan and associated Airport Layout Plan every five to seven years or as demand or needs warrant.

C-4: Coordinate with current and potential future users to understand facility needs in order to plan and develop appropriate aeronautical and support facilities.

**D. Land Use Planning and Coordination**

*Desired Outcome*

Compatible land use planning for areas around the public airport facilities should be proactive while keeping in mind impacts to both the airports and surrounding community.

D-1: Maintain existing open space in the vicinity of the airports especially in key areas off the runway approach and departure corridors to reduce safety risks for people and property on the ground and in the air.

D-2: Discourage high density residential development and encourage open space, commercial and light industrial uses in the proximity of the airports that benefit from, and do not conflict with, aircraft operations.
D-3: Adopt a combination of applicable criteria, standards, and zoning techniques that will protect the airports, aviation users, and surrounding neighbors from incompatible development and potential airport impacts.

   a. Consider improvements to the Airport Vicinity Overlay District to better identify an Airport Influence Area and Critical Zones including Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 14 Part 77, Safe, Efficient Use, and Preservation of the Navigable Airspace, Idaho state airspace protection surfaces, height restrictions, land use and building restriction areas, and siting criteria for evaluating land uses or activities in key areas adjacent to the airports.

   b. Require Fair Disclosure Notification for new or substantial redevelopment of lots, buildings, structures, and certain activities near the airports notifying of the potential of low overhead flights, noise, dust, fumes and other potential aviation impacts.

D-4: Prohibit uses in areas around the airports that attract birds and/or other wildlife, create visual hazards, and emit transmissions which may interfere with aircraft communication or navigation, or otherwise obstruct or conflict with airport operations.

D-5: Establish a formal coordination process with the Cities of Hailey, Bellevue, Carey and ITD Aero (owner of Smiley Creek Airport) to identify an agreed upon Airport Influence Area and Critical Zones consistent development guidelines and regulations that utilize local, state, and federal/FAA guidelines, standards, rules, regulations and other best management practices encouraging compatible land uses adjacent to the airports.

D-6: Notify other jurisdictions of the intent to adopt or revise the comprehensive and other land use plans that may impact the airports including the evaluation of future planning activities to ensure they will not result in an increase to incompatible land uses or development adjacent to the airport.

D-7: Incorporate consistent, agreed upon language regarding compatible land use planning practices in both the city and county comprehensive plan documents.

D-8: Optimize regional transportation and multimodal transit connections to and from current and future facilities through inter-jurisdictional cooperation and planning.

D-9: Public airport facilities should be sited and planned in compliance with other sections of this Comprehensive Plan and Blaine County Ordinances. Public airport facilities and planning should account for existing economic activity and transportation infrastructure so as to integrate with, complement or augment them.

D-10. Review and adopt amendments to zoning regulations addressing private airstrips and heliports located on private land.
E. Economic Benefit

**Desired Outcome**
Planning and development on and around the airports should account for the current and future economic benefit to the community.

E-1: Encourage aviation related economic development opportunities in appropriate locations on or surrounding the airports.

E-2: In general, allow uses on and around the airports that promote the efficient mobility of goods and services consistent with regional economic development and transportation goals.

F. Regulatory Compliance

**Desired Outcome**
Remain compliant with FAA and state Grant Assurances and sponsor obligations at the Friedman Memorial Airport.

F-1: Review, understand and continue to comply with the various Grant Assurances and sponsor obligations when accepting FAA and state grants.

G. Friedman Memorial Airport Replacement Airport

**Desired Outcome**
A replacement airport should be sited in Blaine County and be capable of accommodating existing and future aviation operational demand.

G-1: Continue to support FMAA’s current “dual path” approach to meet demand at the existing site while looking ahead to a potential replacement site.

G-2: Consider health, safety, and general welfare, potential environmental impacts, and all Desired Outcomes and policy statements of this Plan when reviewing future replacement airport sites. When a preferred alternative site is identified, follow all required processes to change the applicable land area’s zoning and implement necessary zoning text amendments to accommodate a replacement airport site in accordance with the Airport Master Plan and all other environmental and airport planning studies and documents associated with a replacement airport process.

G-3: Allow designation of a replacement commercial airport as an Essential Community Facility per Idaho code. This designation recognizes the great importance of a commercial airport to the economic viability of Blaine County.

G-4: Integrate a new commercial service airport into the existing ground transportation grid, including close proximity to the north-south State Highway 75 corridor.
Chapter 1A - Public Airport Facilities
Appendix - Chapter 1A. Public Airport Facilities

Review/Summary of Feasibility Study (2006)

The 2004 Master Plan Update identified and evaluated potential options to address the Airport Reference Code (ARC) C-III compliance issues resulting from the increase in unscheduled CAT C and D operations, as well as scheduled airline service using CAT C aircraft. A series of alternatives were developed to address safety standards for existing operations and necessary facility improvements to accommodate forecast demand. While some of the improvements were possible within the existing property boundary, most of the options required significant expansion at the existing site.

Recognizing the impracticality of addressing safety standards and needed facility improvements at the existing site, the Friedman Memorial Airport Authority (FMAA) initiated the 2006 Feasibility Study to identify a suitable site for a replacement airport. The 2006 Feasibility Study identified a study area boundary, the required size of a replacement airport, a description of possible sites, the screening and evaluation of alternatives, and a financial feasibility analysis. The criteria used for selecting viable sites for the replacement airport included geographic proximity to the current airport, ILS instrument approach capability in all weather conditions, the ability to meet FAA safety and design standards, and the ability to accommodate current and future aircraft operations.

Study Area Boundary

The initial definition of the study area for the 2006 Feasibility Study included the area within a 60-minute drive time. The 60-minute drive time limit was a generally accepted industry standard for travel time to an airport.

The center of activity in the Wood River Region has historically been the Sun Valley Resort. Therefore, the initial 60-minute drive time identified for the 2006 Feasibility Study assumed that the majority of the Airport users were located in Sun Valley. However, while the resort and the communities of Sun Valley and Ketchum continue to have a significant impact on the Blaine County economy, development to the south in cities such as Hailey, Bellevue, and Carey represent a shift in growth patterns from historic norms.

As a result, the 2006 Feasibility Study recognized that siting of the replacement airport must consider the impact of the potential demand associated with new development in the southern portion of Blaine County, and the long-established demand driven by Sun Valley. Therefore, the sites considered in the screening were all within a 60-minute drive time of Hailey and Sun Valley.

Replacement Airport Size/Desired Footprint

The 2006 Feasibility Study used an airport footprint template based on approximately 600 acres, configured to encompass the following:

- One 8,500-foot primary runway
- One full-length parallel taxiway with connecting taxiways
- Associated safety areas, protection zones, and clearance setbacks as required for ARC C-III airport design standards
- Aircraft parking aprons with access taxiways
- Areas for terminal facilities, ARFF equipment and storage, maintenance equipment storage, and additional support facilities
- Areas for GA uses including an FBO and/or private hangars
The template was placed over the United States Geological Survey (USGS) maps and oriented to minimize topography impacts, while considering observed and prevailing winds. At the end of the process, 16 candidate sites were identified for inclusion in the site selection analysis.

**EIS Phase I Plan of Study (2008)**

The 2006 Feasibility Study served as a catalyst for the FAA to embark on an EIS for a Replacement Airport. The 2008 EIS Phase I Plan of Study accounted for and further developed the 16 potential sites identified by the 2006 Feasibility Study. Of the 16 sites, seven had minimal or no changes to their configuration or previously identified location. The locations of the remaining nine sites either were adjusted or reconfigured to accommodate a crosswind runway, or both (to improve site viability).

The 2008 EIS Phase I Plan of Study included documentation of reviews and associated findings related to the following:

- Determination of the guiding parameters for pre-planning analyses, including study area identification, facility requirements for new airport sites, identification of 2006 Feasibility Study sites carried forward, and possible additional sites and any refinements required for the sites being carried forward.

- Evaluation of all identified sites. The evaluation of alternative replacement airport sites focused on the assessment of each identified site from an aviation-related perspective, leaving the analysis of environmental issues to the FAA’s Draft EIS (2011), which the FAA ultimately terminated prior to completion.

Prior to identifying and analyzing possible replacement sites, a set of guiding parameters, or assumptions, were established to help direct the pre-planning efforts and identification of alternatives to carry forward into the EIS.

**Blaine County Guiding Principles**

Below are six guiding principles determined by the Board of County Commissioners to be essential to the success of the airport project.

- **Guiding Principle 1** - Robust commercial and general aviation transportation service and infrastructure are vital to the economy of Blaine County.

- **Guiding Principle 2** - Meeting federal design and safety standards in air and ground operations is paramount in planning for air service and related infrastructure.

- **Guiding Principle 3** - Air service and infrastructure improvements are affordable and achievable.

- **Guiding Principle 4** - Minimizing environmental impacts is a high priority in planning for and implementing air service and infrastructure improvements.

- **Guiding Principle 5** - Air Service is an important and interconnected mode of transportation for Blaine County and the region.

- **Guiding Principle 6** - A replacement airport south of Bellevue along State Highway 75 is the long term solution and objective.
References and Sources

Blaine County – Comprehensive Plan (2009)

City of Twin Falls, Idaho - Comprehensive Plan, Public Airport Facilities Chapter (2016)

FAA 5010 Airport Master Record – GCR AirportIQ 5010 website


Friedman Memorial Airport – Airport Master Plan (2018)

Idaho Transportation Department – Division of Aeronautics – Idaho Airport Land Use Guidelines (2016)

Idaho Transportation Department – Division of Aeronautics – Idaho Airport Land Use Guidelines (2016); Model Public Airport Facilities Comprehensive Plan Chapter (Appendix A)

Idaho Transportation Department – Division of Aeronautics – Idaho Airport System Plan (2019)

Idaho Transportation Department – Division of Aeronautics – Idaho Airport System Plan; Airport Economic Impact Analysis (2019)

\[i\] FAA 5010 Airport Master Record - GCR AirportIQ 5010 website

\[ii\] Friedman Memorial Airport - Airport Master Plan (2018)