

## "What Are We?"

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The Treasure Valley Partnership is a group of mayors and commissioners from Ada and Canyon Counties in Southwest (Treasure Valley) Idaho who became concerned with the change in their communities because of rapid growth in the 1990's. In 1997, the mayor of Boise, Brent Coles, realized that if something wasn't done to proactively manage the number of people and jobs flowing into the region, the communities of the Treasure Valley would lose their character and many of the traditional western ways. He organized a two day meeting called the "Treasure Valley Institute" to see what the other mayors and commissioners were thinking.

After two days of listening to national speakers talk about the economics of growth, city planning, urban design and transportation, the elected officials realized they had more in common than they thought. They knew their citizens wanted good recreational opportunities, good job opportunities, housing and a quiet, "small-town" feel to their communities. They wanted to provide these without sacrificing the traditional agricultural base that has supported the area for many years.

After the two day meeting, a document was signed, called the "Treasure Valley Partnership Agreement" in which all members of the meeting agreed to work together on 4 areas (see Partnership Agreement 2000) and to meet monthly to keep communication open and learn more about how to be proactive and use the area's growth in a beneficial manner.

In 1998, the Partnership formed a 501-C3 non-profit organization. The organization is funded by annual dues the members pay and there is one part-time staff person, Executive Director Elizabeth Conner.

The agenda topics for the monthly meetings follow the goals of the Partnership Agreement. These meetings also provide a forum for groups and individuals with information on growth related issues to meet with leaders from all the

communities in the two county area. The Partnership does outreach to other groups such as highway districts and local planning organizations to help build ties between elected officials and staff.

The most unique aspect of the Partnership is that the Partnership has no legally binding decision making authority. That is, the mayors and commissioners who sit on the Partnership boards cannot bind their represented communities to any issues. The Partnership Agreement is purely a "gentleman's agreement" and it is up to the members to inform, educate and guide their city councils and commissions in any issues that may legally commit their communities. While this may be seen as potentially ineffective, the result has been outstanding. The mayors and commissioners work with their council and commissions to further the goals of the Partnership in many unique ways (see Accomplishments).

Many of the Partnership's original members have left office since 1997, but because of the camaraderie of the group and the dedication to proactive growth management, the new members have come on board with great attitudes and support for the Partnership.

Thanks for viewing our website, and we hope it will answer some of the questions that you have about new ways local governments can manage growth.

## Useful Links

[Boise City](#)

[Congress for the New Urbanism](#)

[Urban Land Institute](#)

[Assoc. of Idaho Cities](#)

[Community Planning of Southwest Idaho](#)

[Treasure Valley Futures](#)

[Idaho Association of Counties](#)

[City of Meridian](#)

[State of Idaho](#)

[City of Caldwell](#)

[Ada County](#)

[Canyon County](#)

[U.S. Conference of Mayors](#)

[National Assoc. of Counties](#)

## [Idaho Smart Growth](#)

### **Map**

(click on map for larger image)

### **Background**

***Politics is a smooth file, which cuts gradually, and attains its end by a slow progression.***

Montesquieu, Spirit of Laws, XIV, 13

*"The Treasure Valley Partnership has brought mayors, commissioners, and other elected officials in a public forum at which they have spent time on common issues in relation to urban planning. It has been the foundation for our community to better understand each other and in doing so we have become one to tackle those common interests and to assist each other in interests that, although they may not be of primary concern to one entity, it concern the whole valley. One of our biggest challenges will be to continue to garner support through our constituents as to what we are doing and make them partners to achieve these goals.*

**Mr. Jerome Mapp, regional planning consultant/Boise City Councilmember**

*"The Treasure Valley Partnership is a wonderful opportunity for all the elected officials to better understand their decisions on a regional basis and make connections when they make sense regarding transportation and community preservation.*

**Ms. Sherry McKibben, architect/  
planner/Dirctor, University of Idaho  
Urban Research Design Center**

**W**hen people look for innovative ways of doing things, they rarely think to look to Idaho for cutting edge examples. In the past, the stereotypic description of this state consisted primarily of potatoes and scenic areas. However, public attention is moving past the stereotype and toward the truly innovative work on growth issues being done by local governments in Southwest Idaho. And these entities are beginning to receive national recognition for their efforts.

In 1997, Mayor Brent Coles of the City of Boise recognized that the Treasure Valley was changing in many ways due to the increase in population. Economic growth was needed not only for the region but for the state as well. However, the pace at which the growth occurred began to seriously affect the quality of life that many residents had enjoyed for years. Cities that were once separated by miles now are separated only by the width of a road. Areas of Impacts for the cities had spread rapidly.

Farmland was beginning to be consumed at a rapid pace. Mayor Coles realized that none of the communities surrounding the City of Boise wanted to be a suburb of Boise. But without cooperative work by all the mayors and councils from around the Treasure Valley, there would be no overall plan for the growth.

After extending many invitations and making personal calls, Mayor Coles was able to organize a meeting of all the mayors of Ada County, the mayors of the two largest cities in Canyon County and their respective county commissioners. The result of this meeting was the formation of the Treasure Valley Partnership and an agreement for its members to work cooperatively on four areas:

1. Creating coherent regional growth and development patterns
2. Linking land use and transportation
3. Protecting and enhancing recreational opportunities and open space
4. Reinforce our community identities and sense of place

After only 3 days, the 10 elected officials from different backgrounds and different communities were able to agree on 4 common areas, which was a remarkable achievement in the world of politics and planning. In addition to establishing these four common areas as goals, they also agreed upon the objectives to address them. These objectives are:

**Goal 1. Create Coherent Regional Growth and Development Patterns.**

*Partnership members will:*

- Jointly review our individual comprehensive plans, comparing them against realistic growth projections and individual community goals.
- Coordinate our planning for and investment in wastewater treatment infrastructure.
- Work together to manage storm water runoff.
- Work together to conserve ground water reserves.
- Explore options for local finance initiatives and regional revenue sharing.
- Explore the possibility and impact of establishing growth boundaries.

**Goal 2. Link Land Use and Transportation.**

*Partnership members will:*

- Document unmet needs for regional transit service.
- Improve coordination of existing services to meet those needs.
- Work with major employers to encourage transit use.
- Create a network of bicycle and pedestrian trails that link the Boise River Greenbelt, other waterways, the foothills, and rail corridors throughout the Treasure Valley.

- Develop policies to coordinate street and highway design with adjacent land uses.
- Define future transit and development opportunities along the Short Line corridor, and report on those opportunities in conjunction with the October trial of the RegioSprinter.
- Prepare for additional transportation funding and decision-making authority which should become available to the region after the 2000 Census.

**Goal 3. Reinforce our Community Identities and Sense of Place.**

*Partnership members will:*

- Work with the Treasure Valley community to define a vision for the region's future.
- As a result of this visioning process, establish a flagship goal, to serve as the focal point for regional planning and economic development.

**Goal 4. Protect and Enhance Open Space and Recreational Opportunities.**

*Partnership members will:*

- Coordinate and promote existing activities and facilities.
- Publicize and build upon existing cooperative efforts.
- Encourage acquisition and preservation of interconnected and coordinated open space.

*And in May of 2000, added to this list was:*

**Goal 5. Educate, Reach Out and Build Support for the Partnership Vision.**

*Partnership members will:*

- Share ideas and strategies with other elected officials.
- Involve the general public and neighborhoods.
- Engage the business community.
- Include appropriate agencies and staff.

All of these objectives and goals have been addressed to varying degrees in the last 4 years. For example:

- Cooperative work on coordinating

Comprehensive Plans has taken place.

- The Partnership meets on a monthly basis.
- Each member has a better regional awareness of overall issues.
- Studies have been conducted of air quality and water drainage. As a result an agreement was reached by the Partnership and the Idaho DEQ to work regionally on air shed problems.
- All members are working together on shared transportation issues, including the start up of a regional transit authority.
- The Partnership was awarded a \$510,000 grant from the FHWA for the development of a regional approach to growth issues and preservation our quality of life.
- The Partnership received a grant award of \$250,000 to improve energy efficiency in city and county owned buildings.
- Specific Memorandums of Understanding were drafted between cities for improved emergency response and sharing of infrastructure facilities.
- 18 miles of railroad track leading into the spur line between Boise and Nampa were preserved.
- Members publicly endorsed the preservation of part of the Boise Foothills.

One of the most important accomplishments of the Partnership was the successful conclusion of the Treasure Valley Futures: Alternative Choices for the American West project the \$510,000 grant from the Federal Highway Administration. The project was a collaborative effort on behalf of the Partnership, the local metropolitan planning association, a local citizen activist group and other interested parties. It has resulted in phenomenal resources for not only the Partnership members but for other elected officials, businesses, and citizens as well. These resources include detailed maps of how the Treasure Valley is growing in both residential units and business locations along with showing transportation systems, water systems and the physical structures of the valley. A resource book to assist local officials and others with planning for their communities has also been created. This book or "toolkit provides specific examples of alternative development patterns and how to implement them, example ordinances, area plans, mixed use developments along with other related information.

## **Role of Elected Leadership**

The active members of the Partnership include the mayors and commissioners from Ada County Boise City, Canyon County, Garden City, City of Meridian, City of Parma, City of Eagle, City of Star, City of Caldwell, City of Nampa. Other communities in two-county area are also considered members even though their leaders cannot always participate to the same extent as the core members.

The active members of the Partnership are the driving force to accomplishment of the organization's goals. While the Partnership does employ a part-time Executive Director, individual members perform the bulk of the work necessary to accomplish the stated goals. The level of trust among members is unique. Even when disagreements arise among partners, the agreement to disagree on some issues does no damage to the overall cooperative effort of the group.

The Partnership has accomplished many things in the four years since its original meeting. The members of the Partnership have also changed with elections. And two new members have been added. The strength of the Partnership is the common belief of its founding members that the work of this group will be critical in preserving Idaho's unique quality of life.

New members have also embraced this belief, regardless of their political beliefs or agendas.

## **Level of Community Involvement**

During the early years of the Partnership, only annual events were conducted to provide information to the public about the work being done by the organization. The Partnership focused primarily on building relationships with local chambers of commerce, businesses and interest groups, including some private citizens, groups and environmental groups.

After the Treasure Valley Partnership summit in May 2000, the focus turned to more frequent public education and input. The Partnership co-hosted an open forum on how the Treasure Valley is growing and asked the public for input on their areas of concern. A workshop concerning regional energy demands was sponsored by the Partnership for elected officials as well as

staff members from cities and counties.

The Partnership will host a regional forum for other elected officials from counties neighboring Ada and Canyon Counties. The goal of the forum is to inform these officials of the work the Partnership is doing and to cultivate future Partnership

members. The Partnership will continue to look for assistance on outreach as the year continues. The members believe that it will be crucial to form many "partnerships in order to accomplish the outlined goals. There is a high level of expectation from many groups that the way the Treasure Valley Partnership does business should be emulated local governments around the country. In fact, members of the Partnership and its Executive Director have been asked to speak to groups such as the National Association of Counties, the United States Conference of Mayors, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

## **You Too Can Form Your Own Partnership!**

The Partnership model is easily applied to any area that has visionary leaders committed to cooperative efforts and a coordinating person to assist the process. However, visionary leaders who can agree and cooperate with each other are sometimes hard to find. That is why it is necessary to start slowly and identify just a few areas that maybe only a few leaders (with or without vision) can agree upon.

Although the population size of the city and county members Partnership varies from 1,700 to 180,000, the Five Goals of the Partnership the common uniting factors for these members. These goals came specifically from questions asked to each leader about concerns they had about their own community. As the answers were reviewed, it was discovered that each member had addressed five issues. These issues were then compiled into a common format that members understood and agreed upon. When the common issues were identified in a neutral manner, the agreement to work together naturally followed.

However, one critical step to building a "partnership cannot be overlooked. That is an unwritten consensus of the Partnership members to agree to disagree and to just leave some issues alone. Those issues may never be resolved by Partnership members and can be addressed in other forums by other groups. Many people ask why the Treasure Valley Partnership will not take on additional issues. The response

is that there may be a time in the future when the members will agree to take up other goals, but retaining the focus of the Partnership on sustainable growth issues is a core value with its members. There is also a great desire to not replicate other agencies work. The Partnership is designed as an organization to assist mayors and commissioners in making good decisions in the five goal areas for their individual communities as well as for the Treasure Valley.

The organization does not attempt to do traffic planning, encourage specific economic development or implement radical growth strategies. It does try to understand the region, how it works now and gather ideas as to how it could work better in the future. Initial obstacles to the Partnership included the belief held by some city councils and county commissions that it may not be a productive this to spend time and money on this effort. Most of the participants in the original Treasure Valley Institute held 1997 were very enthusiastic and willing to participate. But some of their fellow elected officials were less confident about the project.

There was also criticism that other governing bodies were not included, such as highway districts and school districts. The rationale of having a small select group initially was so that the Partnership could develop a strong core of elected officials who understood the need for regional cooperation and who could reach out to other elected officials, groups and the public. Another concern was that a large number of Partnership members would lead to overwhelming and unproductive meetings. In the four years since the original meeting, concerns about the Partnership becoming ineffective or ultra-exclusive have diminished greatly. Because of the members, openness and willingness to include any group on the agenda, there is a strong base of public support for the Partnership.

## **Securing Long Term Quality of Life**

*"Let us judge what can be done by what has been done,"*

**Rousseau**

This phrase accurately describes the ongoing work of the Partnership. Because of the professional and personal relationships of Partnership members, issues that would have been impossible to address ten years ago are not only possible but logical to work on now in order to protect and

enhance the quality of life in the valley. Because of the efforts of the Partnership, a regional transportation authority initiative passed by 70% in a public vote in both Ada and Canyon Counties.

The metropolitan planning organization that formerly operated for only Ada County is now the planning authority for both counties. The Partnership does not have specific goals for environmental protection, economic development and social equity. However, it is understood by all members that if the five goals of the Partnership are not met in some way, if outreach is not ongoing, and if the cooperative work does not continue, it will have a detrimental effect on all those aspects of the region.

Every member realizes that in order to have a stable, healthy community, air and water quality cannot be allowed to deteriorate. The Treasure Valley has beautiful landscapes and recreational opportunities that draw people from all over the world. Often these people want to stay and create businesses.

The businesses need employees from all backgrounds. The Partnership members work to provide unique, safe and desirable communities within a framework of the larger community of the Treasure Valley.

Another significant element of the Partnership is that every member sits on the boards of various interest groups, including local economic development groups, transportation planning groups, environmental groups, and other organizations of a regional nature. Because of the "cross-pollination from these groups, the Partnership members are better able to understand the specific economic issues of the valley and share this information with other members. Many Partnership members are active in both religious and secular organizations devoted human rights awareness in the valley. Each Partnership member has an area of strength that he or she shares with other members and the Executive Director.

Because of this, the elected officials have a better overall understanding of the large number of issues in the valley. This does not mean that the Partnership organization will work on all of the issues. But more importantly, it does mean that each member is more aware of these subjects and along with efforts being made to address them.

In May 2000, the Treasure Valley Partnership presented an

action list on the long-term goals of the Partnership. This priority list included:

1. Working on focusing new development along the rail road line that runs from Boise to Nampa.
2. Continuing work on the Treasure Valley Futures grant.
3. Building awareness and implementing a regional open space trail program.
4. Developing an outreach program for citizens, elected officials and others to continue working on the four original goals.

**AMENDED ARTICLES OF  
INCORPORATION  
OF  
TREASURE VALLEY  
PARTNERSHIP, INC.**

The undersigned, acting as the incorporator of a nonprofit corporation ("Corporation") organized under and pursuant to the Idaho Nonprofit Corporation Act, Title 30, Chapter 3, Idaho Code ("Act"), adopts the following Articles of Incorporation for the Corporation.

**ARTICLE I. NAME.**

The name of the Corporation is Treasure Valley Partnership, Inc.

**ARTICLE II. NON PROFIT STATUS.**

The Corporation is a nonprofit corporation.

**ARTICLE III. PERIOD OF DURATION.**

The period of duration of the Corporation is perpetual.

**ARTICLE IV. INITIAL REGISTERED OFFICE AND AGENT.**

The location of this Corporation is in the City of Boise, County of Ada, State of Idaho. The address of the initial registered office is at 6145 Glencrest Avenue, Boise, Idaho 83703 and the name of the initial registered agent at this address is Elizabeth Conner.

## **ARTICLE V. PURPOSES.**

The purposes for which the Corporation is organized and will be operated are as follows:

- A.** This organization is organized and operated exclusively for charitable purposes within the meaning of section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
- B.** To enlist the support, involvement, talents and efforts of community and civic leaders in the Treasure Valley region and thereby facilitate cooperation among counties, municipalities and other political divisions of the State of Idaho so that regional issues, events, problems, and opportunities can be handled in ways that best serve the public interest.
- C.** To open, operate and staff an office for the purpose of carrying on Corporate business on a day to day basis.
- D.** To exercise all powers granted by law necessary and proper to carry out the above-stated purposes, including but not limited to the power to accept donations of money, property, whether real or personal, or any other thing of value. Nothing herein contained shall be deemed to authorize or permit the Corporation to carry on any business for profit, to exercise any power, or to do any act that a corporation formed under the Act, or any amendment thereto or substitute therefor, may not at that time lawfully carry on or do.

## **ARTICLE VI. LIMITATIONS.**

Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the Corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by a charitable organization exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue law) or (b) by a charitable organization contributions to which are deductible under section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue law). No part of the net earnings or the assets of the Corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its members, directors, officers, or other private persons except that the Corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay

reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article V. hereof. No substantial part of the activities of the Corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the Corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

## **ARTICLE VII. MEMBERS**

The Corporation's members shall consist of municipalities and county governments in Ada and Canyon Counties who desire to participate in and contribute to the Corporation. Members shall be represented by one (1) individual whom the member shall elect and designate. Initially, the members and representatives are as follows:

Vern Bisterfeldt, Ada County  
Brent Coles, City of Boise  
Bob Corrie, City of Meridian  
Ted Ellis, City of Garden City  
Maxme Horn, City of Nampa  
Garrett Nancolas, City of Caldwell  
Laurale Neal, City of Kuna  
Marq Ross, City of Star  
Todd Lakey, Canyon County  
Rick Yzaguirre, City of Eagle

The members shall have such rights as are provided in the Act and are consistent with the management authority that these Articles grant to the Board of Directors of the Corporation.

## **ARTICLE VII. BOARD OF DIRECTORS.**

The affairs of the Corporation shall be managed by its Board of Directors. The representative designated by a member pursuant to Article VII of these Articles shall serve as a Director and be appointed by each member for a three (3) year term. Each Director shall hold office until the end of the term or until a successor shall be appointed. The actual number of Directors shall be fixed by the Bylaws of the Corporation. Other than the Directors constituting the initial Board of Directors, who are designated in these Articles, the Directors shall, in the event of vacancies, be appointed in the manner and for the term provided in the

## Bylaws of the Corporation.

The names and street addresses of the persons constituting  
the initial Board of Directors

<b>NAME</b>	<b>ADDRESS</b>
<b>Vern Bisterfeldt</b> , Ada County	650 W Main St, Boise, ID 83702
<b>Brent Coles</b> , City of Boise	150 N Capitol Blvd, Boise, ID 83702
<b>Bob Corrie</b> , City of Meridian	33 E Idaho Ave, Meridian, ID 83642
<b>Ted Ellis</b> , City of Garden City	201 E 50, Boise, ID 83714
<b>Maxine Horn</b> , City of Nampa	411 3rd St South, Nampa, ID 83651
<b>Garrett Nancolas</b> , City of Caldwell	621 Cleveland Blvd, Caldwell, ID 83605
<b>Laurale Neal</b> , City of Kuna	329 W 3'd St, Kuna, ID 83634
<b>Marq Ross</b> , City of Star	P.O. Box 130, Star, ID 83669
<b>Todd Lakey</b> , Canyon County	1115 Albany, Caldwell, ID 83605
<b>Rick Yzaguirre</b> , City of Eagle	310 East State, Eagle, ID 83616

## **ARTICLE IX. MEMBERSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS.**

Members shall make contributions to the Corporation in amounts or proportions, payable at such times, or intervals, and by such methods as the Board of Directors may prescribe. Said contributions shall be made in compliance with any and all applicable state and federal laws and local laws applicable to the political subdivisions who are members.

## **ARTICLE X. DISTRIBUTION AND DISSOLUTION.**

On the dissolution or winding up of the corporation, its assets remaining after payment of, or provision for payment of, all debts and liabilities of this corporation, shall be distributed to a nonprofit fund, foundation, or corporation which is organized and operated exclusively for charitable purposes which has established its tax-exempt status under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Upon the dissolution of the Corporation, the board of Directors shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all liabilities of the Corporation, distribute all the assets of the Corporation consistent with the purposes of the Corporation as set forth in Article V. in such manner as the Board of Directors shall determine. Any such assets not so distributed shall be distributed by the district court of the county in which the principal office of the Corporation is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organizations, as such court shall determine to be consistent with the purposes of the Corporation.

## **Meeting Dates**

The Partnership meets monthly on the last or 4th Monday of the month. Each meeting is scheduled from 11 a.m. to 2 p. m. and the meetings rotate from each member city and county. Each host is expected to purchase lunch for the other members and also to showcase what is happening in their communities. Often members will have meetings during local festivals or events for fun.