



PLANNING & BUILDING DEPARTMENT

January 17, 2012

Jacqueline A. Buchanan, Forest Supervisor
Bridger-Teton National Forest
P.O. Box 1888
340 N. Cache Street
Jackson, WY 83001

Dear Ms. Buchanan:

Thank you for your consideration of a direct sale of a portion of the Forest Service's North Cache administrative site. The Town of Jackson strongly believes this sale will fulfill the intent of the Forest Service Facility and Realignment Act (FSFREA) and provide the means for the much needed maintenance and upgrade of BTNF facilities within the Town of Jackson. The Town also believes that there is substantial public benefit to the Town of Jackson and the greater Jackson Hole community from the proposed sale as stated in our letter dated December 7, 2011.

The Town is eager to complete the necessary final application for official consideration of the direct sale. To that end, we submit the following required application materials listed in your December 20, 2011, letter for your review and consideration.

- A. Development Plan and Conceptual Site Development Plan;
- B. Evidence of No Equally Suitable Lands; and
- C. Evidence of funding ability necessary to complete the sale.

The Town believes these materials will demonstrate our eligibility to purchase the site, the possible future uses for the site and the associated public benefits, and evidence of the capacity to complete the sale of the property within the timeframe you have proposed. If you need additional information for this final application, please contact Tyler Sinclair, Town Planning Director or Town Manager, Bob McLaurin at (307) 733-3932.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Barron".

Mark Barron, Mayor
Town of Jackson

Enclosures: Attachment A: Development Plan and Conceptual Site Development Plan
Attachment B: Evidence of No Equally Suitable Lands
Attachment C: Evidence of Capacity to Close on Property

Attachment A: Development Plan and Conceptual Site Development Plan

Although the exact final uses of the property are not able to be determined at this time, the Town has identified a number of possible uses of the property - each providing significant public benefit. It is the intent of the Town that one or all of the identified uses of the site will be implemented over the next many years based upon the needs of the community at that time.

Upon purchase of the property the Town commits to work with the community to formalize the final uses, and develop a site plan that will achieve the greatest public benefit for the entire community. The community will need to be directly involved to determine the specific public benefits provided by the purchase of the property. The Town finds it will be essential to work with the community to determine the specific public use type, location, and configuration in order to finalize the site plan.

The overarching concept for the development of the site is to secure adequate land to meet the future needs of the community for years to come, while providing a successful transition between the Town of Jackson and the National Elk Refuge and a multitude of Federal lands beyond. Listed below are a variety of possible uses of the site and the public benefit associated with the particular use. Although the specific use of the property cannot be determined at this time, it is clearly demonstrated that the community has an overwhelming need to secure the property in order to meet the future needs of the community. Please see the included Conceptual Site Development Plan for additional information. The following uses are listed in no particular order:

- **Critical expansion of the local street grid to address safety and traffic congestion in the community.** The Town has long planned the extension of Mercill Avenue, King Street and possibly Perry Avenue through this site to provide much needed road and pedestrian redundancy and connectivity in the community. The proposed roadway is critical to providing essential access to many community facilities such as the St. John's Medical Center, Jackson Hole Airport and Downtown Jackson. Constraints such as Saddle Butte to the west and federal lands to the east make this site critical for providing an alternative route through Town in order to alleviate severe traffic congestion and safety issues that currently exist in the area. The loss of this opportunity to address these critical life safety issues through the transfer of the site to private ownership would not be acceptable. These public streets would also provide additional access and redundancy to property that will continue to be owned by the Forest Service.
- **Opportunities for coordinated transit between the Town and federal lands.** The public benefit of the proposed roadway connection through the site would create the opportunity for the development of a capture site for a public transportation transfer facility serving the local community and visitors to the National Forests, National Parks and surrounding community. This site is essential to pursuing this goal due to its key location adjacent to the only major transportation route to the variety of public lands located north of Town and its proximity to the many existing public parking facilities in the area. The local community has demonstrated a commitment to public transit to meet our future transportation goals, and the opportunity to extend local transit services into the surrounding public lands from this site would have significant public benefit for locals and visitors by reducing traffic congestion in Town and on public lands.
- **Expansion of existing public parking.** The site is strategically located near the new Home Ranch Welcome/Visitors Center and public parking lot, which is used to capture the thousands of visitors coming to downtown Jackson to experience the many commercial,

recreational and social uses and activities found in this area. The ability to add additional parking supply in this area is extremely important to meet the economic development and alternative transportation goals of the community.

- **Essential land to expand the Jackson/Teton County Recreation Center.** The site is strategically located adjacent to the existing Jackson/Teton County Recreation Center, which is in need of additional land to accommodate a much needed expansion of the facility. The community has already committed one million dollars towards the planning and construction documents to facilitate the needed expansion.
- **Opportunity to preserve open space and protect wetlands.** The site contains approximately 1.6 acres of wetlands and open space adjacent to the National Elk Refuge. The preservation of this area would not only protect this natural resource but allow for the seamless transition between the vegetative characteristics of the Refuge and the site. Use of this area for educational purposes is desirable, possibly including pathways and interpretive features to allow the public to become familiar with the surrounding natural environment. The provision of pathways will also allow for a needed pedestrian/bicycle connection between the North Cache corridor and East Jackson.
- **Opportunity to house the community.** Due to high land costs and a lack of privately-owned land, Jackson Hole continues to experience a housing shortage. The site will not only provide opportunities for the community to provide housing, but to do so in a location that is in the town core and accessible by alternative modes of transportation.
- **Consideration of a multiple use/gathering space in Downtown Jackson.** The lack of multiple use/gathering space in downtown Jackson has presented some challenges in meeting the community's goals. The ability to use a portion of the site to provide multiple use/gathering space will not only allow for sustainable economic development for the community, but needed community gathering space as well.

Attachment B: Evidence of No Equally Suitable Lands

The Town offers the following evidence that there are no equally suitable private, local government, State or other Federal lands available to meet the Town's proposed uses for the site.

- **Scarcity of Private and Administrative Public Land.** Teton County is comprised of approximately 2.6 million acres of federally owned land, including the Bridger Teton National Forest, Targhee National Forest, the National Elk Refuge and Yellowstone/Grand Teton National Parks that for the most part are off limits to providing services and facilities to meet the needs of residents and visitors. Of all the land in Teton County – an area nearly twice the size of the State of Delaware – less than three (3) percent is not owned by the Federal Government. As a result, the Town finds it imperative that the proposed current administration site be maintained in public ownership in order to continue to allow the Town to serve the future needs of local residents and the millions of visitors to the area, many of whom are users of Forest Service lands.
- **Strategic Site Location.** The property has acted as the focal point for federal, state and local public services in the community for decades. Agencies surrounding the North Cache administration site include:
 - United States Fish and Wildlife Service Visitor Center
 - Wyoming Department of Game and Fish (administrative offices and public information/licensing center);
 - Town of Jackson (public restrooms, interpretive center, public parking, community recreation center) and
 - Teton County School District #1 (Jackson Elementary School).
 - The National Elk Refuge

For many years, these partnering public agencies worked cooperatively to complete a master plan for the site, coordinating individual agency services and facilities from this integrated central location to best serve the public. The Town continues to believe in this concept and the significant public benefit of providing one central well connected location for a variety of public services and facilities. The loss of this central piece of property to private ownership would preclude the long planned connections and interactions between the surrounding Federal, State and Local agencies listed above (see insert), the missions of which have significant overlap all providing significant benefit to the public.



- **Extremely Rare Size of the Parcel.** The ability to obtain a 10 acre parcel strategically located in downtown Jackson is an extremely rare opportunity. To our knowledge, there are no other public or private sites of this size and location available for purchase in Teton

County. The significant size of the site will allow the Town to address a variety of community needs in a strategic location while being able to take advantage of the economies of scale available through the coordinated use of such things as parking, roadways, pedestrian amenities, and staffing.

- **Consistent with the Community Comprehensive Plan.** The community is nearing completion of the 2011 Jackson/Teton County Comprehensive Plan. The plan specifically identifies this site (see attached) and areas adjacent to it to remain in public ownership in order to meet the future needs of the community. More specifically, the Comprehensive Plan states that *"[the area containing the site] will continue to provide essential public services in a central location, consistent with the sustainability and community service policies of the Plan."*

Furthermore, the Plan states that *"in the event that lands within this district are conveyed into private ownership, any development for non-public uses will require this plan to be amended."* The Comprehensive Plan has been in development for nearly six years, and the community has clearly stated its desire to maintain this site for public purposes. It is for this reason as well as the many others previously stated, that we believe that the direct sale is the best option for the future of the site.

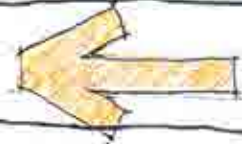
Attachment C: Evidence of Capacity to Close on Property

The Town has identified the following options for closing on the purchase of the proposed site within the identified timeline.

- **Special Purpose Excise Tax (SPET).** Pursuant to Wyoming Statutes, the Teton County Commissioners and the Jackson Town Council (Joint Board) are authorized to approve tax initiatives to be placed on the local ballot for voter consideration. Local residents are asked to support projects that will benefit the residents of the community and promote the health, safety, and welfare of the community while clearly demonstrating the needs, desires, and benefit to the public. The use of this financing option would allow the Jackson Hole community to directly determine the public benefit provided by the purchase of the property by the Town for the proposed possible uses. The Town finds that there is absolutely no better way to ensure the Forest Service that public benefit will be met with the proposed purchase than directly asking the local community to vote on it. The timing of this financing option is consistent with the Forest Service suggested timeline with ballot options available in May, August and November 2012.
- **Revenue Bonding.** The Town has the required credit rating and resources to go to the bond market to secure to necessary funding to purchase the site.
- **Available Funding.** The Town has approximately 4.2 million dollars in 2006 SPET funding for the purpose of roadway extension, downtown parking, downtown public restrooms and downtown public amenities that may be used to assist in the purchase of the site. In addition, the Town has available General Fund securities that could be utilized if necessary to complete the proposed transaction.

The Town finds it likely that some combination of the above financing options would be utilized to secure the site within the identified timeline.

To National Parks,
National Forest Lands and Airport



US Fish and Wildlife
Service Visitor Center

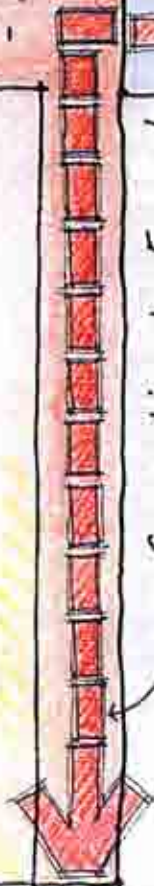
National Elk Refuge

Wetlands/Open
Space & Pathways Opportunities

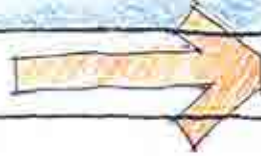
Resulting
Town Parcel
(10 +/- ac)

Resulting Forest
Service Parcel
(5.32 +/- ac)

- Development Opportunities:
- Expansion of Rec Center
 - Community Housing
 - Multiple Use/ Gathering Space
 - Transit Transfer Facility
 - Expansion of Public Parking



Connection to Expand
Street Grid



To Downtown

Interpretive Center
Public Restrooms
and Public Parking Lot

East Gill Ave.

Jackson/Teton
County
Recreation Center

Teton County
School District #7
(Jackson
Elementary School)



To St. John's Medical Center

Development Plan and Conceptual Site Development Plan