



The Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance's detailed written comments regarding the second draft of the Jackson/Teton County Comprehensive Plan (released in April 2009) are all available via <http://www.jhalliance.org/library.htm#comments>.

The following document includes our verbal comments made in March 2010 during the joint town/county planning commission hearings regarding Theme Five, "Provide for a Diverse and Balanced Economy."

Re: Theme Five Discussions

Below are comments Kristy Bruner, Community Planning Director, verbally presented at the March 4, 2010 Hearing.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Just a few brief comments since you already have our written comments specific to Theme Five that we submitted on February 4th.

In this week's staff report, we were really happy to see staff's questions that will help refine what a sustainable economy should mean for Jackson. We believe that Rocky Mountain Institute's extensive work on this topic can provide a good foundation for discussing these issues. As we mentioned, a key goal for this chapter must be to distinguish between the terms growth (in terms of physical expansion) and economic development. When discussing and debating these terms (growth and development), and making recommendations on policies regarding the desired economy, it's important to all be on the same page about what these broad terms represent, before you get into detailed discussions.

As you discuss future bases of the economy, another item that we feel is important to keep in mind is the extent of commercial and residential development that has already been approved and that is in the pipeline – We certainly aren't facing a "no growth" scenario with a decision to focus future efforts on the economic development of our existing economy and businesses (as opposed to being further dependent on additional growth in land area or increase in development potential).

Overall, we urge you to ask the tough questions about what is in the best interests of a long-term sustainable economy. We hope that you will commit to policies that will protect our most important natural assets, quality of life (and quality of the visitor experience) rather than promoting a continuation of policies that focus on the short-term, and that don't provide the stability to endure economic highs and lows.

Thanks for your work.



Re: Theme Five: Provide for a Diverse and Balanced Economy

Below are the comments Becky Tillson, Community Planning Associate, verbally presented at the March 11, 2010 Hearing.

Becky Tillson, Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance. Thanks for the opportunity to comment tonight.

As you continue in your review of Theme Five, we wanted to say that we appreciated your commitment at last week's meeting to protecting the basis of our economy – our natural resources. We also applaud your vote to incorporate suggestions from the Rocky Mountain Institute into this theme. RMI is a well-respected and incredibly valuable resource for communities such as ours, and their work is backed up by comprehensive research. So thank you for taking the time to consider their suggestions and viewpoints, particularly when it comes to creative ways to build our economy without building our physical footprint, such as building upgrades, energy efficiency, and local business ownership and patronage, among many other creative solutions. We hope that your discussions will continue to be informed by RMI's work.

In our written comments on this theme, we outlined seven specific topics that are missing from the current draft, and we hope that once you are finished with staff's questions you will not move on without at least discussing why this theme removes so much of the emphasis on community character and existing conditions that were central to the 1994 chapters that relate to the economy. Specifically, the current plan attempted to describe the types of signage, appropriate building size and scale, and the types of development that we want or do not want to see with relation to character preservation. If this is not covered in the Comp Plan, the legal underpinning for the LDRs, can we assume that signage, and building type and scale, will be regulated?

Before moving on, it will be important for this board to clarify the big shift from the 1994 Plan that this draft makes with regard to community character as an economic goal. Last summer, when you discussed the Vision Chapter, you took an 11-1 vote to incorporate the concept of community character back into the Vision Statement for the entire plan. It is important that this board asks whether or not the economy of the region should be clearly linked to community character, as it is in the current Plan.

As always, please refer to our written comments for more detail, and thank you for your time and effort throughout this process.