



CITY OF HAUSER
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

2026

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

This Comprehensive Plan reflects the values of our community, respects our environmental limits, and guides growth at a pace Hauser can responsibly support

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Introduction & Community Background

Founded in 1947, the City of Hauser is a small North Idaho community of approximately 700 residents encompassing just under one square mile. Located near the Idaho–Washington border at the northwest edge of the Selkirk Mountains, Hauser surrounds the 625-acre Hauser Lake – a defining natural feature that shapes both the landscape and the community’s identity.

Hauser developed gradually as a lakeside settlement following the arrival of the railroad in the late 1800s. The community grew from its early roots in transportation, agriculture, and timber into the primarily residential town it is today. Originally known by other names, the lake was renamed in 1910 in honor of Samuel T. Hauser, a regional pioneer and supporter of railroad expansion in North Idaho. The City was incorporated as Hauser Lake Village on May 12, 1947, and later transitioned to official city status in 1981.

Today, Hauser remains defined by its natural setting – forested hillsides, open views, and access to the lake. The community values its rural scale, environmental quality, and small-town character. This Comprehensive Plan builds upon that legacy, guiding future growth in a manner that protects natural resources while supporting thoughtful development.

Planning Horizon

The planning horizon for this plan covers the years 2026 – 2045, a 20-year duration, which allows for progressive and iterative development and implementation of the plan. At a minimum, the plan will be reviewed at least every five years to ensure that new developments and changes in the community are accounted for.

DRAFT

Planning Elements

This Plan is adopted pursuant to the Local Planning Act. The plan addresses the statutorily authorized purpose of protecting the “health, Safety, and general welfare” of the people of the City of Hauser (the City). It also fulfills many of the specific purposes for local planning listed in I.C. 67-6502, including : protecting and enhancing property values, ensuring the provision of adequate and affordable public services, avoiding the undue concentration of population, and ensuring that development is commensurate with the physical characteristics of the land.

The Plan considers existing conditions, trends, and desirable goals and policies for the community.

Per Section 67-6508, Idaho local land use planning act requires that the Comprehensive Plan address the following topics:

- a. Property Rights
- b. Population
- c. School Facilities and Transportation
- d. Economic Development
- e. Land Use
- f. Natural Resources
- g. Hazardous Areas
- h. Public Services, Facilities, and Utilities
- i. Transportation
- j. Recreation
- k. Special Areas or Sites
- l. Housing
- m. Community Design
- n. Agriculture
- o. Implementation
- p. National Interest Electric Transmission Corridors
- q. Public Airport Facilities

Our Vision for Hauser

Rooted in Land and Water

Hauser is defined by its landscape. The lake at its center, the wooded hillsides, open meadows. The surrounding landscape shapes both the community's setting and daily life. Families gather on the water. Neighbors meet along quiet roads. Wildlife moves through forests and wetlands that have shaped this place long before development arrived.

Residents value Hauser because it feels connected—to nature, to one another, and to a simpler pace of life. The lake is not just an amenity. It is the heart of the community. Clean water, healthy shorelines, and open space are essential to preserving what makes Hauser home.

Stewardship as a Community Value

Hauser has always depended on careful stewardship. The lake and the Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer provide water for recreation, wildlife, and daily life. Protecting water quality is not simply an environmental goal—it is a commitment to future generations.

The natural features of the area—steep slopes, wetlands, stream corridors, forested hillsides, and wildlife habitat—remind us that the landscape has limits. These places contribute to the beauty and ecological health of the community. Building with care, preserving open space, and minimizing disturbance protect both the environment and the town's rural character.

Growing in Balance

Growth will occur and must be guided carefully. But growth must occur in balance with the environment. Development that overwhelms infrastructure, burdens natural systems, or diminishes open space erodes the very qualities that draw people to Hauser.

The community recognizes that some limits are practical—roads, utilities, and services can only support so much at a time. Other limits are natural and lasting.

The health of the lake, the stability of hillsides, and the preservation of open land define the boundaries within which Hauser can responsibly grow.

Preserving Our Small-Town Character

Hauser's character is found in its scale, its views, and its connection to the outdoors. Tree-lined roads, access to the lake, and neighborhoods that blend into the landscape give the town its identity.

That character can change gradually if growth is not guided with intention. Preserving a sense of place means encouraging development that fits the land, respects environmental features, and reflects the community's rural heritage.

This Plan affirms that environmental quality and community character are inseparable. Protecting the lake protects the town. Preserving open space preserves identity.

Looking Forward

By honoring the land, safeguarding water quality, and growing at a pace the community can sustain, Hauser can remain a place where families thrive and the natural environment remains a source of pride.

This Comprehensive Plan serves as a guide for stewardship—ensuring that growth strengthens the community while preserving the natural beauty and small-town spirit that define Hauser.

Community Vision

Hauser will remain a small, rural, lake-oriented community where neighbors know one another and growth occurs at a pace the land, lake, and infrastructure can support. Protecting Hauser Lake, open spaces, and groundwater is essential to maintaining quality of life and community character.

The City's role is to guide land use responsibly and apply standards consistently so that development fits the scale of the community and respects environmental limits. Future decisions will reflect practical stewardship, careful growth management, and respect for the voices of Hauser residents.

Public Participation

Public participation informed the 2026 Comprehensive Plan update. With an estimated 2023 population of 896, participation levels reflect meaningful engagement for a community of Hauser's size.

The City held two open house listening sessions on May 20 and May 31, 2025, and distributed a survey with the March 2025 newsletter. Forty (40) surveys were returned (approximately 4–5% of the population). More than 30 individuals attended the open houses, including year-round residents, absentee property owners, the manufactured home park owner, and seasonal residents. A penny poll provided additional input.

This outreach reflects a broad cross-section of community interests and directly informs the policies of this Plan.

Summary of Outreach Results

Residents expressed strong appreciation for Hauser's rural character, small-town scale, and neighborly relationships. Many voiced support for consistent enforcement of property maintenance standards, city codes, and speed limits to protect community health and safety, including fire prevention.

Hauser Lake remains central to community identity and recreation. While highly valued, residents noted seasonal congestion, speeding, and litter associated with increased recreational use, and expressed concern about safe access and walkability.

Traffic safety was a consistent theme, with support for reduced speeds, appropriate enforcement, and improved pedestrian conditions where feasible.

Land use input emphasized maintaining low-density, rural development patterns and ensuring that infrastructure capacity guides future growth. Many expressed caution regarding higher-density housing and significant commercial expansion.

Overall, community input reflects careful consideration of neighbor perspectives and a shared commitment to preserving Hauser's character while planning responsibly for the future.

SURVEY RESULTS - WHAT PEOPLE SAID...

- ◆ 78% of respondents strongly agreed that Hauser should maintain our small-town tight knit community.
- ◆ 83% of respondents strongly agreed that Hauser should prioritize protecting the lake for swimming, fishing and wildlife.
- ◆ 85% of respondents either agree or strongly agree that rural areas surrounding Hauser should be preserved for timber, agriculture, habitat preservation and recreation.
- ◆ 38% of respondents felt indifferent to more small business and local gathering opportunities being encouraged along the highway.
- ◆ 58% of respondents either strongly disagree or disagree that Hauser should explore additional low-impact housing types, such as accessory dwelling units that integrate appropriately into neighborhoods with 18% being indifferent and 24% agreeing or strongly agreeing.

Residents' biggest concerns ranked most to least important

Change or loss of small-town character	21.6%
Increased traffic	21.6%
Environmental impacts	21.6%
Increased demand for services	12.7%
Increased tourism and boating	11.7%
Wildfire risk	7.8%
Rising housing costs	3.0%

Quotes From Residents

- ◆ “Thankful for not letting people park along the road.”
- ◆ “It’s overcrowded and therefore they do not want services such as schools in the community.”
- ◆ “Fine litterers and post the sign!”
- ◆ “I want a replacement pub for DMACs.”
- ◆ “Too many subdivisions.”
- ◆ “Access from Cloverleaf to north bound Hwy 53”
- ◆ “Oppose ADUs and multi-family housing because do not have infrastructure to handle it.”
- ◆ “Some people are interested in growth along the highway.”
- ◆ “Wildfire risk and poor management of personal property.”
- ◆ “Residents want city officials to uphold the city ordinances.”
- ◆ “Night sky initiatives (and volunteer to help implement).”
- ◆ “Reduction in speed”

Penny Poll Results

A penny poll allows participants to vote for their top concerns by buying their votes with penny's. The results of the poll show that it is most important to residents to "keep a small-town feel" and to protect the lake.

Penny Poll Results

Keep small-town feel	23.8%
Protect the Lake	23.8%
Recreational amenities for locals	16.6%
Protect scenic views	13.2%
More Trails and Pathways	12.6%
More local business on Hwy	7.9%
Other	2.1%

State of the City

Currently, the City of Hauser is in a phase of growth that requires careful planning and management to ensure that the city grows according to the 2026 comprehensive plan. Currently, the region is seeing significant growth in North Idaho. Hauser has seen population growth less than the surrounding areas; however, we have seen a significant increase in tourism, which has created seasonal traffic, parking, and service impacts. While economic growth is typically seen as positive, the influx in population has created a steep rise in cost of living, making living in Hauser less affordable for long term residents. Affordable housing that fits the community design and culture has also become an increasing challenge, with subdivisions being of particular concern.

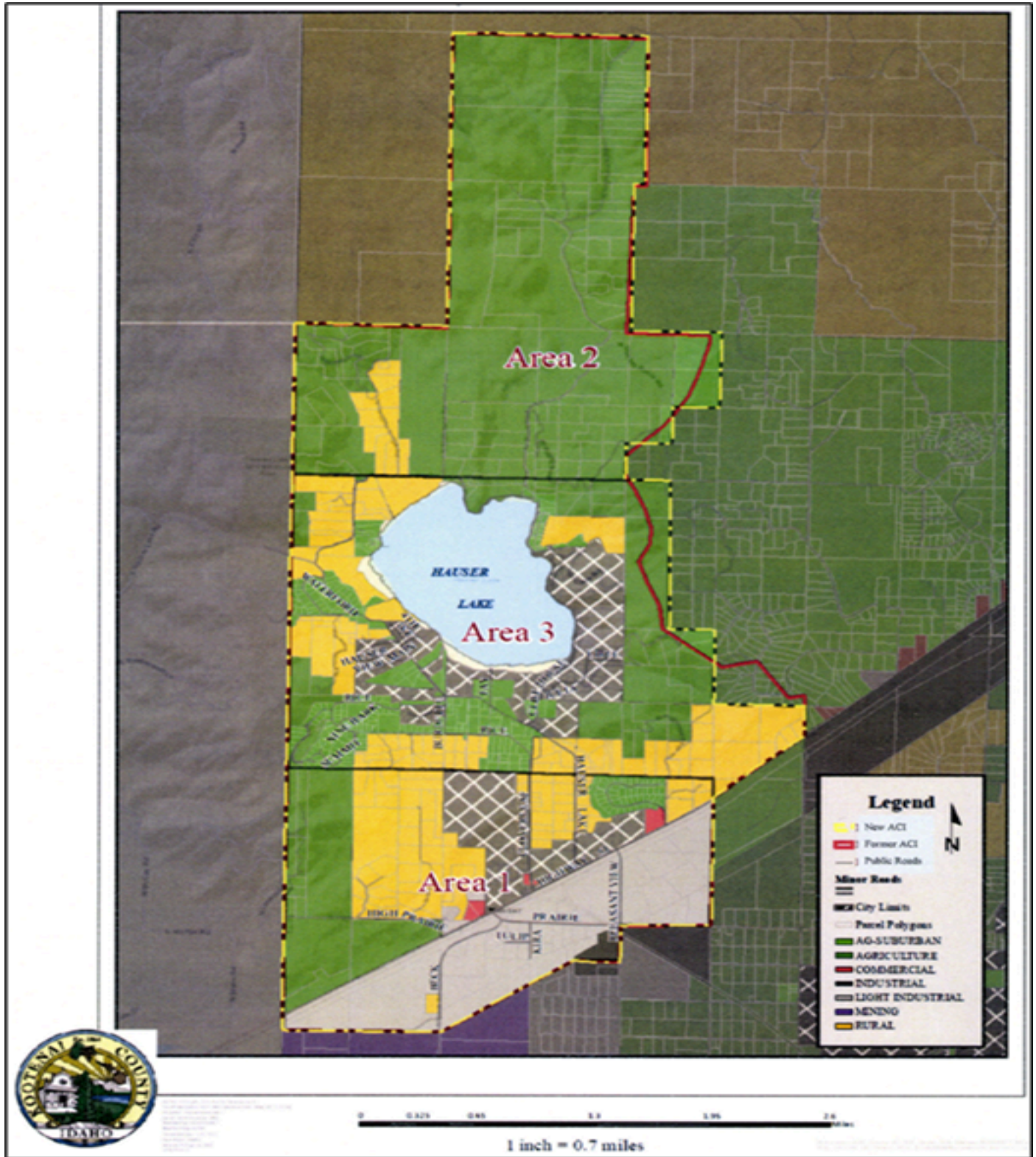
The city faces additional challenges to managing growth and increased tourism with the lake and other surrounding recreation land falling under different jurisdictions.

Hauser put a focus on joint planning efforts to manage relationships and operating agreements for the land within, and adjacent to the Area of City Impact (ACI).

Area of City Impact

An Area of City Impact (ACI) is an area designated outside of existing city limits that identifies “where growth and development are expected to occur.” As such, these areas are “...established, modified, or confirmed based on the ability and likelihood of a city or cities to annex lands ... in the near future.” (Idaho Code § 67-6526). In 1999 Kootenai County and Hauser entered into the Area of City Impact Agreement which defined the ACI boundaries for the City. In 2020, this agreement was renegotiated and adopted on November 5, 2020 per Ordinance No. 557 in addition to Ordinance No. 558 which approved zone changes for all unincorporated parcels in the ACI area from the City.

Between 2020 and 2026, much of the population changes have been driven by increases in people’s ability to work remotely and search out communities with less regulation, and this trend does not look like it is changing, and a revision and update of the 2020 agreement should be performed to ensure that it still supports Hauser’s vision and goals.

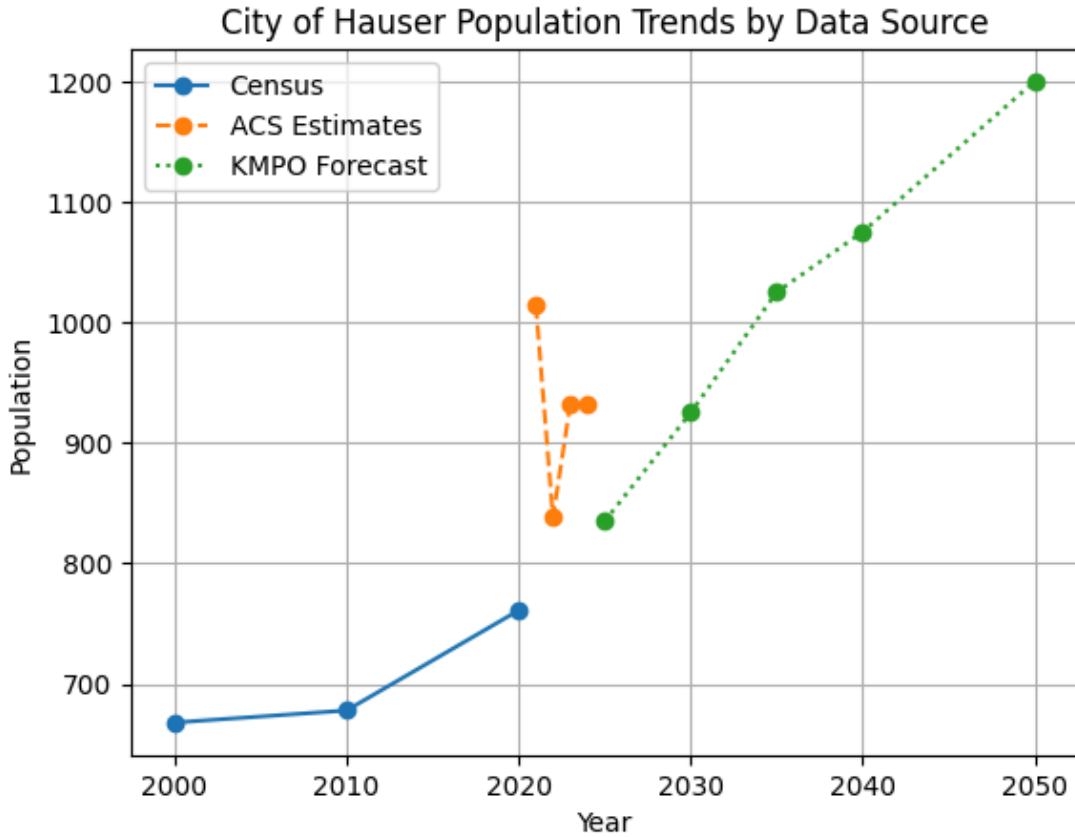


ACI Map

Source: 2020 Areas of Impact Agreement

Population

The City of Hauser is a small community with limited land area and historically modest growth.



Sources: U.S. Decennial Census (2000, 2010, 2020); American Community Survey 5-year estimates (2021-2024); Kootenai Metropolitan Planning Organization (KMPO) Growth Projections 2025-2050.

Population Trends

The City of Hauser has remained a small community over time, with population increasing gradually from 668 residents in 2000 to 761 residents in 2020. This steady pace of growth reflects the community’s rural setting and its long-established pattern of low-density development.

In recent years, Hauser has begun to see more noticeable change. American Community Survey estimates suggest the population has grown to approximately 930 residents as of 2023–2024. While estimates for a community of this size can vary, the overall trend suggests that more people are choosing to call Hauser home.

Looking ahead, forecasts prepared by the Kootenai Metropolitan Planning Organization indicate that growth is expected to continue at a measured pace. The population is projected to reach approximately 1,150 to 1,250 residents by 2050.

Between 2010 and 2020, Hauser grew by approximately 12 percent, compared to approximately 23 percent growth in Kootenai County and 17 percent statewide during the same period. This comparatively slower rate of growth reflects Hauser's small size and rural development pattern. The City represents less than one percent of the County's total population. This reflects gradual, steady growth rather than rapid change

As Hauser grows, it is expected to remain a small, close-knit community. Future development will continue to reflect the qualities that residents value, including a quieter pace of life, rural character, and strong connections to the surrounding region.

Population – Goals and Policies

Goal P-1: Plan for Modest Population Growth: Plan for population growth that preserves the community vision, remains within service capacity, and reflects fiscal realities.

Policies:

- Monitor population trends within the City and surrounding Area of City Impact.
- Review Comprehensive Plan policies periodically to reflect updated forecasts.
- Evaluate annexation proposals for consistency with service capacity and community character.

Community Design

Community design in Hauser reflects its rural setting, natural landscape, and small-town scale. Development patterns should reinforce these characteristics rather than introduce urban forms inconsistent with the community's identity.

Key design considerations include:

- Preserving scenic views of Hauser Lake, forested hillsides, and open fields;

- Avoiding excessive grading, skylining, and visual intrusion;
- Encouraging site design that follows natural topography;
- Maintaining modest building scale consistent with surrounding development; and
- Supporting lighting practices that protect the night sky and neighboring properties.

Community design policies are implemented through the Land Use element, subdivision standards, and development review procedures.

Land Use, Natural Resources & Environmental Stewardship

Introduction

Hauser’s identity and long-term viability are inseparable from its natural environment. Hauser Lake, the surrounding forested hillsides, wetlands, and the Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer are not peripheral features – they form the physical and environmental framework upon which all land use decisions must rest.

This chapter fulfills the Natural Resources, Hazardous Areas, and Land Use elements required under Idaho Code and establishes how environmental systems guide growth and development patterns within the City and its Planning Area.

Growth in Hauser must respect natural limits, infrastructure capacity, and the rural character valued by residents.

Natural Systems That Shape the Community

Hauser’s Planning Area includes three interconnected landscape systems:

1. The Upper Watershed (Selkirk Mountains)
2. The Rathdrum Prairie & Aquifer Recharge Area
3. Hauser Lake & Surrounding Uplands

Each system presents both opportunities and constraints that directly inform land use designations and development policies.

Upper Watershed

The Upper Watershed consists of forested mountains, steep slopes, shallow soils, intermittent streams, and riparian corridors that drain toward Hauser Lake.

These lands:

- Provide critical wildlife habitat
- Filter runoff before it reaches the lake
- Contribute to scenic views and rural identity
- Help regulate stormwater through natural absorption

However, they also present environmental and safety constraints:

- Steep slopes increase erosion and sedimentation
- Forest removal accelerates runoff
- Disturbed soils degrade lake water quality
- Wildfire risk is elevated
- Emergency access may be limited

Planning Response

The Upper Watershed is designated for very low-density development (approximately one dwelling unit per 20 acres). A component of determining development activity and intensity incorporates lot coverages calculated on slope of the lot.

Policies emphasize:

- Minimal land disturbance
- Preservation of native vegetation
- Protection of riparian corridors
- Careful site design
- Wildland-urban interface fire mitigation

This approach protects water quality, reduces hazard exposure, and maintains the forested character of the area.

Rathdrum Prairie & Aquifer Recharge Area

Much of the Planning Area overlies the Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer, a regionally significant groundwater resource. Soils are highly permeable, allowing rapid recharge – and rapid contamination if improperly managed.

This area includes the Hauser Hills and Highway Corridor Land Use designations.

Development density is low with 5 acres minimums in the Hauser Hills and Highway Corridor land use areas.

Vulnerabilities include:

- Quick infiltration of pollutants
- Limited natural filtration
- Septic and stormwater impacts
- Hazardous material risks

Groundwater quality is directly tied to land use intensity.

Planning Response

Land use within aquifer recharge areas must:

- Limit high-risk uses
- Apply strict stormwater standards
- Require careful septic system design
- Manage hazardous materials responsibly
- Encourage low-intensity uses where appropriate

The Highway Corridor commercial designation lies over the aquifer and must incorporate groundwater protection measures, including buffering, controlled drainage, and thoughtful site design.

Aquifer protection is a public health priority and a foundational policy of this Comprehensive Plan.

Minimum lot size is set at 5 acres.

Hauser Lake & Lakeshore Environment

Hauser Lake, approximately 625 acres in size, is central to community identity, recreation, and environmental health. The lake is relatively shallow and sensitive to:

- Nutrient loading
- Sedimentation
- Shoreline alteration
- Wetland removal
- Septic system impacts

Wetlands surrounding the lake provide:

- Natural filtration
- Flood storage
- Habitat for wildlife and waterfowl
- Scenic buffering

Even small increases in runoff or disturbance could result in long-term water quality degradation.

Planning Response

The Lake Village designation allows low-density residential development (approximately one-acre parcels), subject to:

- Shoreline protection standards
- Preservation of wetlands
- Vegetative buffering
- Septic regulation
- Stormwater infiltration controls

Maintaining water quality in Hauser Lake protects property values, recreation, and community character.

Hazardous Areas & Environmental Constraints

Environmental protection is also a matter of public safety.

Identified hazard areas include:

- Steep slopes
- Erosion-prone soils
- Wildland-urban interface fire zones
- Wetlands and high-water areas
- Aquifer recharge zones vulnerable to contamination

The City does not identify earthquake faulting, landslide, avalanche, or mudslide hazards within the Planning Area.

Land use decisions should reduce hazard exposure and avoid development in areas requiring extraordinary mitigation or long-term public cost.

Integration with Land Use Designations

Land use designations in Hauser are based on environmental capacity – not arbitrary boundaries.

Densities and allowed uses reflect:

- Soil suitability
- Slope stability
- Water availability
- Septic capacity
- Aquifer vulnerability
- Fire access and emergency response
- Scenic and habitat preservation

Growth is directed to areas capable of supporting development without degrading natural systems. Environmentally sensitive lands are designated for lower intensity use.

Sense of Place & Community Values

Community input confirms that Hauser’s “sense of place” is rooted in:

- A usable and reasonably clean lake
- Forested hillsides and open space
- Wildlife presence
- Scenic views and rural scale
- Limited commercial intrusion

Protecting natural systems protects community identity.

Land Use - Goals and Policies

Goal LU-1: Protect Water Quality

- Prevent degradation of Hauser Lake
- Protect the Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer
- Apply stormwater and septic standards consistent with groundwater protection

Goal LU-2: Preserve Environmentally Sensitive Lands

- Limit development on steep slopes
- Protect wetlands and riparian corridors
- Encourage clustering where appropriate

Goal LU-3: Reduce Hazard Exposure

Address wildfire risk through site design

- Avoid high-risk erosion or drainage areas
- Ensure safe emergency access

Goal LU-4: Maintain Rural Character

- Preserve scenic viewsheds
- Direct commercial activity to designated corridors
- Maintain low densities in environmentally constrained areas

Policy LU-4.1: Encourage development patterns that preserve scenic views of Hauser Lake, forested hillsides, open fields, and prominent ridgelines.

Policy LU-4.2: Discourage building placement that results in excessive skylining or visual intrusion.

Policy LU-4.3: Direct commercial and higher-intensity uses to the designated Highway Corridor to protect residential neighborhoods and resource lands from land use conflicts.

Policy LU-4.4: Maintain low-density development standards in environmentally constrained areas, including steep slopes, aquifer recharge zones, wetlands, and forested lands.

Policy LU-4.5: Encourage site design that follows natural topography, preserves mature vegetation where practical, and minimizes large-scale clearing beyond what is necessary for safety and reasonable use.

Policy LU-4.6: Discourage gated subdivisions and subdivision branding that detracts from community cohesion or creates separation within the broader Hauser community.

Policy LU-4.7: Support subdivision and landscaping standards that maintain a unified community identity rather than emphasizing individual development identity.

Goal LU-5: Encourage Thoughtful Outdoor Lighting Consistent with Rural Character. Hauser values its quiet rural setting, visibility of the night sky, and the natural habitat that surrounds the community. Outdoor lighting should balance safety and security with consideration for neighbors, wildlife, and scenic character.

Policy LU-5.1: Encourage the use of lighting that is directed downward and designed to reduce unnecessary glare or spillover onto adjacent properties.

Policy LU-5.2: Encourage lighting that supports safety and security while avoiding excessive illumination beyond what is reasonably needed.

Policy LU-5.3: Encourage property owners and developers to consider impacts of outdoor lighting on wildlife habitat, neighboring homes, and the visibility of the night sky.

Policy LU-5.4: Where practical, encourage use of timers, motion sensors, or other measures that reduce prolonged illumination when not needed.

Implementation

Implementation tools include:

- Zoning and overlay districts
- Site plan review
- Shoreline protection standards
- Stormwater and septic regulations
- Interagency coordination
- Development standards tied to environmental capacity

Environmental stewardship is a continuous responsibility requiring monitoring, education, and consistent application of adopted policies.

Conclusion

Hauser's future depends on respecting both the limits and strengths of its natural systems.

Land use decisions must reflect:

- Environmental capacity
- Public safety
- Infrastructure constraints
- Community values

Protecting the lake, aquifer, forests, and open lands is not a restriction on growth – it is the foundation for sustainable growth and the preservation of Hauser's small-town character.

Special Areas or Sites

Certain areas within and adjacent to the City warrant focused consideration due to their environmental sensitivity, jurisdictional complexity, or land use significance.

These include:

- The **Area of City Impact (ACI)**, where coordinated planning with Kootenai County guides future annexation and development patterns.
- **Hauser Lake Park and public lake access areas**, owned by the State of Idaho and managed by Kootenai County.
- The **Highway 53 Corridor**, which serves as the designated commercial frontage and primary business area.
- The **Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer recharge area**, which underlies much of the Planning Area and requires careful land use management.

Planning decisions affecting these areas require coordination with partner agencies and careful evaluation of environmental and infrastructure constraints.

Public Services, Facilities, and Utilities

The timely provision of public and private facilities and services to meet demand as development occurs.

Maintaining concurrency ensures that adequate infrastructure is available either when new development is completed or within a specified time frame.

Public, private facilities and services capacity in the Hauser Lake Planning Area are strictly limited. None of the major private and public facilities and services available can serve the projected growth without major improvements.

City Services

The City of Hauser offers a range of community services including City Administration, Business Licenses, Dog Licensing, and Land Use Planning, Permitting

and Code enforcement. Code Enforcement officer, Code Administrator, and City Engineer and Attorney are contracted consultants.

Volunteers from the City and County comprise the Planning and Zoning Commission which is a legal entity of the City but separate from the elected officials and city staff.

Law Enforcement

Law enforcement and animal control services in Hauser are provided by The Kootenai County Sheriff's Department.

Fire Protection

Fire protection and emergency medical services are provided by Hauser Fire, an independent fire protection district separate from the City. The district serves the City and surrounding areas within the Area of City Impact through a volunteer organization operating from a single station.

Mutual aid agreements are in place with neighboring districts, and wildland fire assistance is available through state resources. As a rural community, Hauser faces access challenges, including private roads that may not support large emergency vehicles and limited turnaround areas.

Development shall provide safe and reliable emergency access, meet applicable fire district standards, and demonstrate adequate water availability for fire protection where required. Growth shall not compromise the district's ability to provide timely response.

Emergency Services

Emergency services in Hauser are provided through independent districts and regional agencies. Fire protection and emergency medical response are provided by Hauser Fire. Law enforcement services are provided by the Kootenai County Sheriff's Office, with county-level emergency dispatch coordination.

As a rural community, response resources are limited and rely on volunteer staffing and regional mutual aid agreements. Response times may vary depending on roadway conditions, weather, and call volume. Increased regional traffic along Highway 53 may also influence emergency access and circulation within the City.

Planning Considerations

Emergency service planning focuses on:

- Safe and reliable roadway access;
- Clear addressing and site visibility;
- Adequate apparatus access and turnaround areas;
- Water availability for fire protection; and
- Coordination with service providers.

Development that restricts access or extends beyond service capacity may affect public safety.

Public Services, Facilities and Utilities – Goals and Policies

Goal I-2: Cooperate with emergency response service providers to help protect public health and safety.

Policy I-2.1: Coordinate land use decisions with emergency service providers.

Policy I-2.2: Require new development to provide adequate emergency access consistent with applicable standards.

Policy I-2.3: Support regional cooperation and mutual aid agreements.

Policy I-2.4: Encourage growth patterns that maintain reasonable response times and do not overextend rural service areas.

Utilities

Existing Conditions

Utilities and public services in Hauser are provided primarily by other jurisdictions and private systems.

Domestic water service within the City limits is provided by the Hauser Lake Water Association, a small private water system with limited capacity. Additional small water systems and numerous private wells serve properties within the Hauser Lake Planning Area.

Wastewater is managed through individual septic systems. Due to the City's proximity to Hauser Lake and surrounding natural resources, proper siting, maintenance, and responsible development practices are essential to protect water quality and preserve rural character.

Electrical service is provided through the regional power grid by Avista Utilities and Kootenai Electric Cooperative. High-voltage transmission lines are located within the Area of City Impact (ACI). Under the adopted ACI agreement, Kootenai County retains land use authority within the ACI and regulates transmission facilities in that area. The City will coordinate with the County on matters affecting future annexation areas or nearby residential development.

Natural gas service is provided by Avista Utilities.

Broadband and telecommunications services are available from private providers, including Ptera, Cyberonic, CenturyLink, Intermax Networks, Spectrum, Xfinity and Ziplly Fiber. Service levels vary by location.

Solid waste collection is provided by private contract, with disposal supported by the Kootenai County transfer station serving the region.

No National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor traverses the City.

Infrastructure capacity within Hauser is limited. Utility capacity is limited and may require upgrades to accommodate additional growth.

Concurrency and Utilities

Development shall occur only when adequate public and private facilities are available, or when improvements are guaranteed within a defined timeframe.

New development must demonstrate:

- Verified water system capacity or approved well availability;
- Compliance with septic system standards and protection of water quality;
- Adequate fire and emergency service access; and
- Installation or financial security of required improvements prior to occupancy.

Where capacity is insufficient, the City may phase development, condition approvals on improvements, or defer action until services are available.

Growth shall not reduce service levels for existing residents.

Utilities – Goals and Policies

Goal U-1: Align development with available utility and service capacity while protecting natural resources.

Policy U-1.1: Require confirmation of water availability prior to development approval.

Policy U-1.2: Require compliance with septic standards to protect surface and groundwater quality.

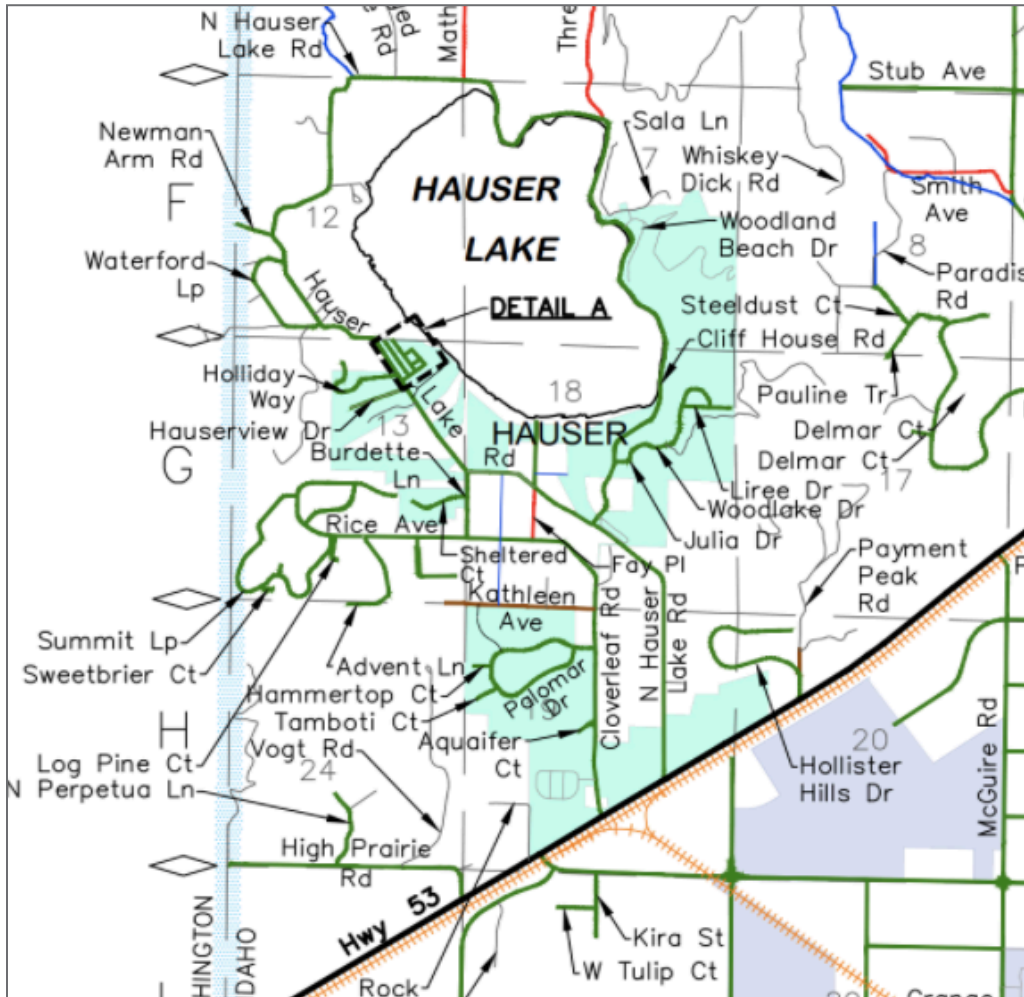
Policy U-1.3: Require necessary infrastructure improvements to be installed or bonded before occupancy.

Policy U-1.4: Coordinate with private providers and Kootenai County to maintain reliable service and consistent land use decisions within the Area of City Impact.

Policy U-1.5: Ensure utility planning supports Hauser’s small-town, residential character and does not outpace the community’s ability to provide reliable service.

Transportation

Existing Conditions



Hauser's transportation network is rural in character. Primary corridors provide regional access, while local roads serve residential areas. Most roads were built to rural standards and have limited shoulders, pedestrian facilities, and intersection capacity.

Hauser is accessed primarily from Highway 53, which borders the City and is under the jurisdiction of the Idaho Transportation Department. Highway 53 has experienced significant increases in traffic due to regional growth. A major improvement project is currently underway to eliminate the at-grade railroad crossing at Pleasant View Road. As access patterns are modified and internal routes are adjusted, traffic volumes and circulation within the City may change. The City

will coordinate with the Idaho Transportation Department and the Post Falls Highway District to address potential safety and access concerns.

As growth occurs, roadway safety and functionality must be maintained.

Transportation Concurrency

Development shall demonstrate that impacted roadways can safely accommodate projected traffic.

When impacts exceed acceptable conditions, mitigation may include roadway improvements, intersection upgrades, access management, traffic control measures, or pedestrian safety enhancements. Required improvements shall be constructed concurrent with development or secured through a development agreement.

The City may conduct right-of-way inventories to identify opportunities for safer pedestrian travel. Where feasible and consistent with rural character, development may be required to dedicate right-of-way or construct pedestrian travelways, pathways, or separated walking areas to improve safety and connectivity.

Transportation - Goals and Policies

Goal T-1: Maintain safe and functional roadways while preserving rural character.

Policy T-1.1: Require traffic impact analysis for developments generating significant trips.

Policy T-1.2: Require transportation improvements necessary to mitigate impacts to be completed or bonded concurrent with development.

Policy T-1.3: Coordinate with Kootenai County and regional agencies on roadway planning within the City and Area of City Impact.

Policy T-1.4: Inventory existing rights-of-way to identify opportunities for future pedestrian travelways and safety improvements.

Policy T-1.5: Encourage development to incorporate pedestrian pathways or walking areas where appropriate and feasible, particularly in areas of concentrated residential development.

Integrated Concurrency Statement

Hauser will grow at a pace that protects public safety, maintains service reliability, and preserves its rural character. Development will be approved only when adequate facilities are available or when improvements are secured.

Land Use and Housing Coordination

Hauser’s land use and housing decisions will reflect the realities of available services. Growth should occur where water, septic suitability, roadway access, and emergency services can reasonably support it.

The City will avoid designating land for densities or uses that exceed available infrastructure capacity. Higher-intensity or commercial uses should be limited to areas with adequate road access and utility service.

New housing should:

- Match available water and septic capacity;
- Be served by safe road access;
- Include simple pedestrian connections where practical; and
- Respect the community’s rural setting and lake environment.

Future land use and housing changes will be reviewed for consistency with available utilities and transportation capacity.

Hauser will grow carefully and responsibly, maintaining its small-town character while protecting public safety and natural resources.

Figure 10 - Transportation Network

Agriculture

Although the City of Hauser is primarily residential in character, agricultural lands and timber operations remain present within portions of the Planning Area and surrounding rural areas.

Agricultural activities contribute to the region’s economy, open space character, and rural identity. The City recognizes the importance of minimizing land use conflicts between residential development and lawful agricultural operations.

Land use decisions within the Planning Area should respect Idaho's Right-to-Farm protections and consider buffering, site design, and density standards that reduce potential conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural uses.

Housing

Some information on housing is provided here but no formal housing component is adopted in the plan because Hauser does not operate a public housing assistance program.

Hauser is a small, primarily residential community with a housing pattern that reflects its rural and lake-oriented character. The City does not provide public housing. Housing opportunities consist primarily of single-family detached homes and manufactured housing located either on private lots or within established mobile home parks.

Existing Housing Conditions

Housing Types (2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates):

- 60.7% single-unit detached homes
- 38.6% mobile homes
- Multi-family housing is not provided for under the Hauser Comprehensive Plan or Development Code
- 91.4% owner-occupied housing units

Hauser's homeownership rate significantly exceeds Kootenai County (72.3%) and Idaho (72.0%), reflecting a stable, long-term residential community with strong owner occupancy.

Household Characteristics

According to 2022 ACS Table S2501: Of the 407 total Households, 281 or 69% are Family Households. With 210 or 51.6% being married couple family homes, 71 Other family homes, 126 Non family homes, 107 Householder living alone, 37 homes are occupied by people 65 or older.

The data indicates that Hauser is predominantly a family-oriented community, with over half of all households consisting of married couples. However, nearly

one-third of households are nonfamily households, and over one-quarter consist of individuals living alone. Approximately 9.1% of households are seniors living independently, which may influence future housing considerations related to aging in place.

Housing Market Trends

Home values in Hauser increased steadily between 2018 and 2022, consistent with regional growth trends.

Market adjustments followed:

- 2023: Values declined approximately 9%
- 2024: Additional 1% decline
- 2026: Early indicators show a 3% rebound

In 2023, a new development – The Ridge at Hauser – began selling homes, many priced above \$1 million. In a small housing market such as Hauser’s, a limited number of high-value sales can skew median home value data and should be considered when evaluating long-term trends.

The City’s housing policies are guided by the availability of water service, septic suitability, roadway access, and protection of environmental quality. Growth in housing must remain consistent with these physical and service-based constraints.

Housing – Goals and Policies

Goal H-1: Maintain a stable, primarily single-family residential Community consistent with Hauser’s rural character and infrastructure capacity.

H-1.1 The City supports primarily single-family residential development consistent with adopted land use designations.

H-1.2 Manufactured and modular homes are permitted on private lots and within designated parks, subject to applicable development standards.

H-1.3 Multi-family housing is not provided for under the current Comprehensive Plan or Development Code.

H-1.4 Housing density and development intensity shall remain consistent with available water capacity, septic suitability, roadway access, and public safety considerations.

H-1.5 The City does not administer public housing programs but will comply with applicable state and federal fair housing requirements.

Housing Considerations

Given Hauser's high homeownership rate and limited housing types, future housing discussions may focus on:

- Maintaining affordability for local residents while preserving community character.
 - Monitoring the market influence of higher-end developments.
 - Ensuring housing growth remains consistent with infrastructure capacity, including the community's small private water system with limited connections.
 - Considering housing options that support seniors and smaller households while maintaining the City's rural character.
-

Recreation

Recreation in Hauser is rooted in the land and water that define the community. The lake, wooded hillsides, open space, and quiet roads provide opportunities for boating, fishing, walking, wildlife viewing, and simple outdoor enjoyment.

For residents, recreation is less about built facilities and more about preserving access to nature and maintaining the community's small-town character.



Hauser Lake Park & Public Access

Public access to Hauser Lake is provided through Hauser Lake Park.

The park and boat launch are owned by the State of Idaho and managed by Kootenai County Parks and Waterways.

The City of Hauser does not own or operate the facility. However, seasonal use directly affects surrounding neighborhoods and local infrastructure.

Changing Conditions

As North Idaho has grown, use of the lake has increased. What was once primarily local recreation now attracts significant regional and out-of-state visitors.

Residents have expressed concerns regarding:

- Overflow parking on neighborhood streets
- Traffic congestion during peak summer weekends
- Litter and improper waste disposal
- Noise during early morning and late evening hours
- Pressure on limited roads and services

These concerns reflect a desire to maintain safety, cleanliness, and neighborhood livability – not opposition to public access.

Because management authority rests with the State and Kootenai County, addressing seasonal impacts requires coordination and partnership.

Local Recreation Vision

Community members and City Council have expressed interest in small neighborhood “pocket parks” intended primarily for residents.

The vision is modest and compatible with rural character:

- Small green spaces
- Informal gathering areas
- Limited play features or seating

Several factors must be considered:

Infrastructure Capacity. Hauser relies on limited water service, septic systems, rural roads, and volunteer emergency services. Higher-use facilities generate traffic, parking demand, and maintenance obligations that may exceed available capacity.

Fiscal Constraints. The City does not currently have dedicated funding for land acquisition, development, or long-term park maintenance.

Regional Demand Pressure. New public amenities may attract broader regional use, potentially creating impacts similar to those experienced near the lake.

For these reasons, any future park development must be proportionate, fiscally sustainable, and consistent with infrastructure capacity.

Open Space Through Development

The Development Code requires open space or land set-asides in certain subdivisions.

In practice, these areas are often preserved as:

- Wildlife habitat
- Drainage corridors
- Wetlands and buffers
- Undeveloped open land

While not developed as active parks, these preserved areas contribute significantly to community character and provide passive recreational value.

In Hauser, protected open space is itself a meaningful recreational resource.

Recreation & Stewardship

Recreation and environmental health are inseparable. The long-term viability of lake-based recreation depends on:

- Protecting water quality
- Maintaining shoreline stability
- Ensuring responsible septic management
- Encouraging respectful visitor behavior

The City supports continued coordination with State and County partners to encourage responsible use and reduce neighborhood impacts.

Recreation – Goals and Policies

Goal REC-1: Protect Lake-Based Recreation

REC-1.1 Support coordination with the State of Idaho and Kootenai County Parks and Waterways regarding seasonal impacts and facility management.

REC-1.2 Encourage responsible recreation practices that protect water quality and shoreline integrity.

REC-1.3 Advocate for reasonable parking management and neighborhood protection near public access areas.

Goal REC-2: Maintain Neighborhood Compatibility

REC-2.1 Evaluate impacts on adjacent properties when considering new recreational facilities.

REC-2.2 Ensure recreational improvements remain consistent with roadway capacity, emergency access, and utility limitations.

Goal REC-3: Encourage Small-Scale, Resident-Focused Recreation

REC-3.1 Support modest neighborhood park opportunities when fiscally feasible and infrastructure capacity allows.

REC-3.2 Require long-term maintenance planning before development of new public facilities.

REC-3.3 Prioritize low-impact amenities consistent with rural character.

Goal REC-4: Preserve Open Space as a Recreational Asset

REC-4.1 Continue requiring open space set-asides in new development where appropriate.

REC-4.2 Recognize preserved natural areas as valuable for passive recreation and environmental protection.

Conclusion

Recreation in Hauser is grounded in nature rather than infrastructure. The lake and surrounding landscape provide the foundation for outdoor enjoyment and community identity.

Hauser's approach is measured and realistic: preserve what exists, improve carefully, and ensure that recreation strengthens – rather than overwhelms – the community.

Public Airport Facilities

There are no public airport facilities located within the City of Hauser or its Area of City Impact.

The nearest regional airport facilities are located outside the City's jurisdiction. At this time, no airport-related land use compatibility issues have been identified within the Planning Area.

National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor

There are currently high-powered electrical transmission lines and high-pressure natural gas lines within the Area of City Impact of Hauser. These are both located over the Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer as well. As per the Area of City Impact agreement, the City of Hauser is not a regulatory authority.

Economic Development

- Economic Development is coordinated with the Land Use, Transportation, and Public Services and Facilities Elements to ensure internal consistency throughout the Comprehensive Plan.

Community and Economic Context

Hauser is primarily a residential community within the broader Kootenai County economy. The City had an estimated population of approximately 896 residents in 2023, with approximately 481 employed residents.

Employment data reflects residents' place of residence rather than jobs located within City limits. Major employment sectors among residents include manufacturing, retail trade, and health care.

Median household income was approximately \$67,868 in 2023. Homeownership exceeds 90%, reflecting a stable residential base. Many residents commute to employment centers elsewhere in the region.

Infrastructure and Development Capacity

Infrastructure conditions significantly influence economic development potential.

The City does not operate municipal water or sewer systems. Wastewater is managed through individual septic systems. Water service is provided through private wells and a small private water system with limited connection capacity.

These constraints limit the feasibility of higher-intensity or water-dependent commercial and industrial uses. Economic development must remain compatible with available water supply, septic suitability, roadway access, and emergency service capacity.

Commercial Development Pattern

Employment-generating uses within the City are modest in scale and are primarily located along the designated Highway Commercial Corridor. This corridor provides appropriate highway access and separation from residential neighborhoods and remains the intended location for future commercial growth.

Limited commercial uses exist in the Lake Village area as legally established nonconforming uses. Expansion of commercial zoning in that area is not anticipated in order to preserve residential character and lake-oriented development patterns.

Home-Based and Small Businesses

Hauser recognizes the role of small and home-based businesses in supporting local services and providing economic opportunity within a rural community.

The Hauser Development Code includes provisions allowing home-based and small-scale businesses, subject to standards intended to maintain compatibility with surrounding residential neighborhoods and protect community character.

Business licensing and permit review procedures are used to ensure that such uses remain consistent with infrastructure capacity, parking limitations, and adopted development standards.

Economic Development - Goals and Policies

Goal ED-1: Support Small-Scale, Community-Serving Businesses

Direct new commercial, small business and employment-generating uses to the designated Highway Commercial Corridor.

Support small and home-based businesses consistent with adopted development standards.

Encourage businesses that serve residents and travelers without substantially altering community character.

Restrict commercial expansion within primarily residential areas.

Goal ED-2: Align Economic Development with Infrastructure Capacity

Require commercial development to demonstrate adequate and sustainable water supply.

Require compliance with applicable septic standards.

Encourage businesses with lower water demand and limited wastewater generation.

Recognize that higher-intensity commercial or industrial uses may be constrained under existing infrastructure conditions.

Evaluate long-term infrastructure expansion only through careful analysis of cost, environmental impact, water availability, and community support.

Economic Development - Implementation

This element is implemented through zoning regulations, development review procedures, and business licensing consistent with the Hauser Development Code. All land use decisions shall remain consistent with the Future Land Use Map and available infrastructure capacity.

Data Sources

Population, employment, industry, income, and housing data are derived from the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey (most recent five-year estimates available at time of plan preparation) and Idaho Department of Labor data.

School Facilities & Transportation

The Hauser Lake Planning Area is served by Lakeland Joint School District No. 272. For the 2025–2026 school year, the District serves approximately 4,527 students district-wide.

The City does not operate or fund school facilities. However, residential growth within the Planning Area may influence enrollment and transportation demand. Land use decisions should consider potential impacts on school capacity and bus routing.

School transportation is provided by the District in accordance with its policies. Rural roadway conditions and development patterns may affect routing efficiency and safety.

The City supports continued coordination with Lakeland School District regarding anticipated growth and development patterns to ensure that school facility and transportation considerations are addressed as part of overall community planning.

Transportation

Transportation in Hauser reflects its rural character and small-town scale. The community is designed primarily for personal vehicle use. Most residents rely on private vehicles to access employment, schools, and services located outside the City.

There is currently no public transit service within Hauser. The regional bus system, Citylink, serves portions of Kootenai County but does not extend into the City.

Road Network

Roads within Hauser are under the jurisdiction of the Post Falls Highway District (PFHD) and the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD). The City does not own or operate a street department and does not serve as a taxing authority for road maintenance.

The road system primarily consists of rural local roads and state highway access routes. Connectivity is limited in some areas, reflecting historic development

patterns and the community's rural layout.

Community Concerns

Community members have expressed frustration with the complexity of transportation governance, particularly where multiple agencies have jurisdiction over different aspects of roadway planning and maintenance.

Because roadway authority lies outside City government, residents sometimes experience challenges related to road maintenance priorities, traffic management near Hauser Lake and the boat launch, access and safety concerns, and communication regarding planned improvements.

Regional Coordination

While the City does not control road infrastructure, it can participate in regional planning discussions and advocate for local needs.

The City supports coordination and participation in planning efforts with:

- Kootenai Metropolitan Planning Organization (KMPO)
- Kootenai County Area Transportation (KCAT)
- Post Falls Highway District (PFHD)
- Idaho Transportation Department (ITD)

Road Inventory & Planning Cooperation

The City will seek to cooperate with the Post Falls Highway District to develop and maintain a clear inventory of roads within the City and Area of City Impact, identify maintenance needs and long-term improvement priorities, support planning for safe emergency access routes, and share information regarding development patterns that may affect traffic volumes.

Growth and Transportation

As growth continues in the region, Hauser may experience increased daily traffic volumes, seasonal congestion near recreation areas, pressure on limited access routes, and increased maintenance demands on rural roads.

Transportation planning should align with the Growth Management Framework to

ensure that development decisions consider roadway capacity and emergency access.

Transportation – Goals and Policies

Goal T-1: Maintain a safe, functional, and coordinated transportation system that supports residents, businesses, and emergency services while preserving Hauser’s rural character.

Policies

T-1.1: The City recognizes the rural, vehicle-oriented nature of the community and will support transportation improvements that are appropriate to Hauser’s scale and character.

T-1.2: The City shall cooperate with the Post Falls Highway District regarding roadway inventory, maintenance planning, and future improvement priorities.

T-1.3 The City shall coordinate with Kootenai County within the Area of City Impact and with the Idaho Transportation Department regarding Highway 53 access management and safety improvements.

T-1.4 The City shall participate, as appropriate, in regional transportation planning efforts to ensure local interests are represented.

T-1.5 Development proposals shall demonstrate safe and adequate access. Transportation impacts shall be considered during project review to ensure roadway safety and emergency response capability.

T-1.6 The City may require reasonable transportation improvements or mitigation measures when development creates identifiable impacts.

T-1.7 The City shall advocate for safe access and reasonable traffic management in areas near Hauser Lake to protect residents, visitors, and neighborhood character.

T-1.8 Pedestrian or non-motorized improvements may be considered where appropriate, particularly near commercial areas or where safety concerns are identified, provided such improvements are consistent with community scale and proportional to development impacts.

Private Property Rights

The City of Hauser recognizes that protection of private property rights is fundamental. Idaho law requires that comprehensive plans consider private property rights, and the City is committed to respecting those rights in all land use decisions.

When adopting or implementing regulations, the City will follow due process and utilize the evaluation process established by the Idaho Attorney General to review potential impacts on private property.

Under this guidance, a government action:

- Must address a legitimate public interest.
- Must substantially advance that interest.
- Must not deny an owner all economically viable use of their property.

The Idaho Attorney General has identified criteria to help local governments evaluate potential constitutional concerns. An affirmative answer to any of the following does not automatically mean a “taking” has occurred, but it signals that careful review is warranted:

- Does the regulation or action result in a permanent or temporary physical occupation of private property?
- Does the regulation or action require dedication of property or grant of an easement?
- Does the regulation or action deprive the owner of all economically viable use of the property?
- Does the regulation or action significantly impact the landowner’s economic interest?

In Hauser, the Planning and Zoning Commission makes final decisions on certain development permits, including variances and conditional use permits. Other land use applications are reviewed by the Commission with recommendations made to the City Council. The City Council is responsible for final decisions on legislative actions and for ensuring that regulations are constitutionally supported and fairly applied.

Hauser supports the ability of residents to develop and use their property consistent with the community’s rural character and adopted policies.

Goals and Policies – Property Rights

Goal PR-1 Ensure that private property rights are respected and thoughtfully considered in all land use decisions.

Policies

PR-1.1 The City recognizes that protection of private property rights is a fundamental principle of Idaho law and an essential part of maintaining public trust. Local regulations will be adopted only when necessary to protect legitimate public interests.

PR-1.2 In making land use decisions, the City will strive to provide clarity, fairness, and predictability so that property owners understand how regulations apply to their land.

PR-1.3 When adopting or amending land use regulations, the City shall apply the Idaho Attorney General’s regulatory takings analysis as required by Idaho Code to ensure consistency with constitutional protections.

PR-1.4 The City acknowledges that protecting public health, safety, environmental quality, and infrastructure capacity must be balanced with the rights of individual property owners. Regulations shall be proportionate to the impacts they are intended to address.

Comprehensive Plan Implementation

This Comprehensive Plan provides guidance for land use, growth, infrastructure, environmental protection, and community character. Implementation occurs through day-to-day land use decisions, coordination with partner agencies, and periodic review.

Relationship to Development Regulations

The Comprehensive Plan guides the City’s Development Code, subdivision standards, and land use decisions. Zoning and subdivision regulations should remain consistent with this Plan. Amendments to City ordinances should reflect environmental protection priorities, infrastructure limitations, private property rights, and rural character.

Development Review

The Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council implement this Plan through review of development applications, variances, conditional use permits, zoning amendments, and subdivisions. Decisions should reflect the goals and policies contained within each element of this Plan.

Intergovernmental Coordination

Many services in Hauser are provided by outside agencies. Implementation requires coordination with Post Falls Highway District, Idaho Transportation Department, Kootenai Metropolitan Planning Organization (KMPO), Lakeland School District 272, Kootenai County, and Idaho Department of Fish and Game. The City will participate in regional discussions where feasible to represent local interests.

Public Information & Transparency

The City will maintain an accessible and current website providing the Comprehensive Plan, City ordinances, applications and forms, meeting information, emergency contacts, and links to relevant regional agencies. Clear public access to information supports transparency and informed community participation.

Capital Improvements & Fiscal Capacity

Hauser operates with a limited municipal budget and low property tax revenues. Large capital investments are challenging without partnerships or external funding. Infrastructure projects will be prioritized based on safety, necessity, long-term maintenance costs, and available resources.

Plan Review & Updates

The Planning and Zoning Commission is responsible for reviewing this Plan at least every five years. Recommended updates shall be forwarded to the City Council for consideration and adoption. Periodic review ensures continued consistency with Idaho law and changing community conditions.