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### ***Visioning process underway for region***

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By Rosa Moosman

People will have several opportunities in August and September to let elected officials and planners know what they want Bear Lake Valley to be in the near future and in 10 or 20 years.

People will be able to voice what they think is needed for housing, jobs and recreation.

They can look at issues that arise from growth.

Workshops are scheduled in Garden City for Aug. 13, Fish Haven on Aug.14, Georgetown, on Sept 14, Montpelier and Paris on Sept. 15 and Randolph and Garden City on Sept. 16. All meetings are scheduled for 7 p.m.

Those who can't attend a workshop should complete an on-line survey at [www.bearlakevalleyblueprint.org](http://www.bearlakevalleyblueprint.org) which will be available Aug. 13.

A steering committee of local elected officials and community leaders is heading the Bear Lake Valley blueprint. Envision Utah is facilitating the effort and making arrangements for the meetings, surveys, etc.

The regional planning effort was started about a year ago. Claudia Cottle began the process by contacting all of the elected officials in the various cities in Bear Lake and Rich County. The goal was to have a region-wide planning effort, and more coordination between Rich and Bear Lake Counties.

No one is sure what people really want for the valley and how it should be accomplished. It is hoped that there will be a common thread to some of the most important opinions expressed.

Christie M. Oostema and Kevin Fayles from Envision Utah told the News-Examiner, that they are already seeing patterns to the development efforts.

They are finding that many people who live in the valley are hoping for job opportunities that will enable their children and grandchildren to live and work locally.

The steering committee comprised of a large group of community leaders have met, most recently on July 19 to determine where funding and support will come from to complete a planning document that will guide overall planning efforts.

Envision Utah is a non-profit organization that has experience in more than 15 regional envisioning efforts.

That organization does not expect to tell people what to do, but help them find out what is important.

One of the things they expect to do is a mapping exercise that will let people choose what kinds of development or land use they would like to see in their part of the region.

They are emphasizing that it is very important for people from all areas to get involved in the process and have their say.

Considerations for the effort include coming up with a broad regional vision, but not a zoning map or land use plan, finding ways to preserve the quality of life people value, protect private property rights, and make sure any implementation of the plans is local.

Present projections of population growth show that Bear Lake County will remain at about 6,000 population but that Rich County will go from about 2,500 in population to about 4,000 in population in the next 50 years.

It is expected housing for secondary residence will go from about 60 percent to about 75 percent.

That would mean that there would be about three times as many homes in 2060 than there are in 2010.

Most of the growth is expected to occur in the recreational areas of the counties, particularly from St. Charles south to Laketown.

Issues involving growth include what kind of housing will be needed for various age groups, how much that housing will cost, and where it needs to be located.

Other issues include ways to attract industry and business, and where it should be located, and transportation issues. Contributing: Sara Lenz