



Valley Advocates for Responsible Development

Celebrating Over 10 Years of Working Together



Housing Matters!

photo by Larry Thal, Mountainside Village

This newsletter comes at you during another brilliant Teton Valley summer when the community is abuzz with Independence Day and Tin Cup activities. The sunshine and liveliness is certainly welcome after a weirdly warm winter and a spring marked by tragedy. The outpouring of love and support in response to the untimely deaths of several valley residents has proven that the best cure for grieving hearts is the embrace of a tight-knit community. Historically, Teton Valley's community bonds have been strengthened by folks having access to affordable housing, spurring economic and social investment in our community.

Summer 2015, however, has brought perhaps one of the tightest housing markets ever seen in the valley. The rental vacancy rate is near 0% and homes under \$300k are becoming

increasingly scarce. If unaddressed, housing shortages can slow economic growth and fray the community fabric. One only needs to look to Jackson to see the results of a housing crisis, as roads become snarled with commuter traffic, businesses lack quality employees, and longtime residents lament the loss of community.

Prior to VARD, I worked as a consultant studying the housing needs in Teton Valley and the surrounding region. Housing, I believe, is a "happy" problem because it gives us an opportunity to strengthen our economy and invigorate our downtowns. A proactive approach to housing will not only help us accomplish a variety of community goals, but also strengthen the community fabric that makes Teton Valley special.

- Shawn Hill, Executive Director



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Valley Advocates for Responsible Development

MISSION: To shape policy, guide development, and provide outreach to preserve natural resources, protect rural character, and promote vibrant communities in Teton Valley through civic action.

OFFICE HOURS—
M-TR 9:00am-4:00pm
Friday by appointment

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Housing by the Numbers

36

The number of additional rental units currently needed in Teton County, Idaho

Won't the 7000 unbuilt subdivision lots in Teton Valley solve the housing problem?

Unfortunately, no. Building and infrastructure costs push overall housing prices up, making the construction of single-family homes in far-flung rural subdivisions too expensive for most households. The solution for workforce housing problems is building a variety of housing types in established and walkable neighborhoods. The vast majority of these areas are in our cities.

651

The number of additional affordable ownership units currently needed in Teton County, Idaho

\$395k

The median home price in Teton County, Idaho

53%

The number of Teton Valley households with a Jackson commuter

\$54k

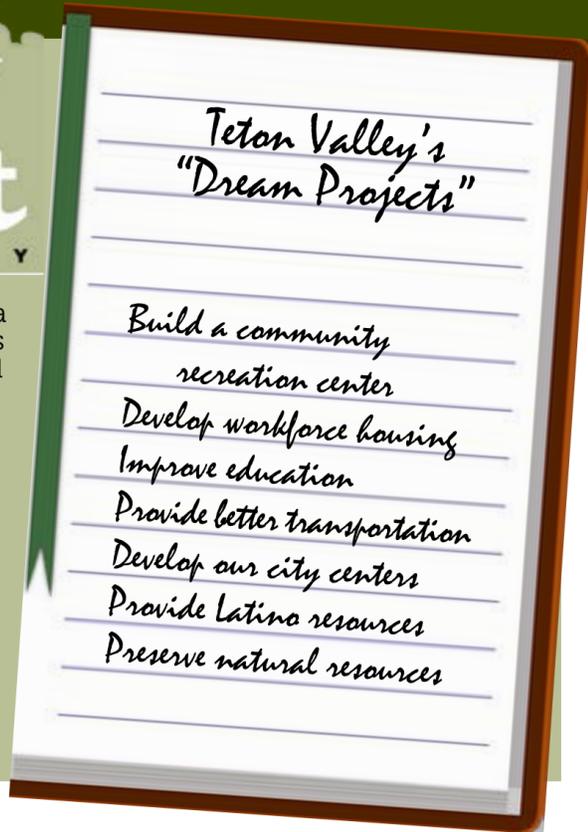
The median household income in Teton County, Idaho

\$1017

Average monthly commuting cost for Teton Valley households

- Source: 2014 Western Greater Yellowstone Housing Needs Assessment; available at <http://sustainablyyellowstone.org/library/>

The 3 "P's" of VARD



On May 18th, VARD held the Grow Smart! event, a workshop aimed at helping community members organize and engage their local governments. A panel of local leaders such discussed their stories, struggles, and accomplishments in working together to realize community goals.



The event concluded with a social hour and networking opportunity. Attendees talked about their "dream projects," finding like-minded partners, and determining next steps. Whiteboards were set up around the room where participants wrote down their ideas and others provided comments. We compiled those ideas to come up with a list of "Teton Valley's Dream Projects."



Preserving natural resources

- We worked with Teton County to create a **replatting ordinance** for nonviable subdivisions, leading to replatting of subdivisions in sensitive areas.
- We will continue to track the county **land use code update** to ensure implementation of natural resource policies in the Comp Plan.
- We have launched an invasive species initiative to develop a **comprehensive, valley-wide weed management program**.
- We have been awarded a grant from Protect Our Winters to study **wildlife corridors** impacted by subdivisions and to identify habitat solutions therein.

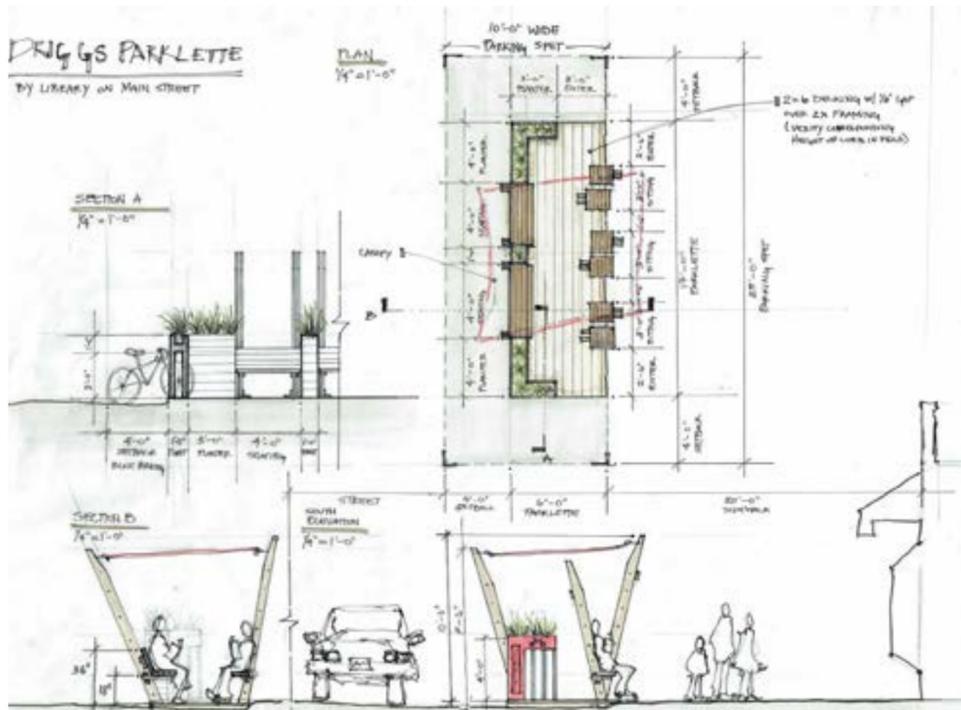
Protecting agricultural character

- We support low-density rural development with reasonable subdivision options to **nurture farming and ranching** in Teton Valley.
- We will be launching a farm-to-table program to help make **locally-sourced food** available and affordable to Teton Valley consumers.
- We will continue to track the county's **land use code update** to ensure implementation of agriculture and rural heritage policies in the Comp Plan.
- We will hold our annual **farm & ranch tour** to educate Teton Valley residents about the challenges and opportunities facing local agriculture.



The Rusty Cheney Memorial Parklet

If all goes according to plan, a new "parklet" will grace the front of the Valley of the Tetons Library in Driggs. The Community Foundation of Teton Valley, through its youth philanthropy program, generously donated funds to create a unique space that will allow folks to hang out in front of the library, read a book, congregate with friends, or take a breather from shopping in Downtown Driggs.



It will be dedicated to the memory of Rusty Cheney (husband of VARD Program Director Anna Trentadue) and feature design components reflecting his persona. His fondness for woodworking will be represented in intricate wood posts, while a canvas cover overhead fastened by carabiners will reflect his love for the outdoors. Bench seats will be interspersed amongst the posts to encourage gathering and community interaction.

VARD enlisted local architect Lindsey Love and Vera Iconica Architects of Jackson to design the parklet. We hope this intimate, interesting space will provide an attractive amenity for Downtown Driggs and be replicated elsewhere in Teton Valley. The parklet is anticipated to open in August 2015.



Promoting vibrant communities

- We created economic development materials such as "**Dig Driggs**" and "**Pathways to Prosperity**" to promote growth in our cities.
- We hold local governments accountable to ensure open and **transparent decision-making** that allows for robust **public involvement**.
- We support **infill development** in our cities to create housing, jobs, access to transportation, and walkable neighborhoods.
- We design and develop civic "**placemaking**" projects to increase community activity and to make our communities more livable (see the "parklet" article to the right).

"To shape policy, guide development, and provide outreach to preserve natural resources, protect rural character, and promote vibrant communities in Teton Valley through civic action."

-VARD Mission Statement



Meet Janna! A Board President decades in the making

If you've done any volunteer work in the valley, chances are you've worked alongside Janna Rankin. This retired law professor, mother of two, and community member extraordinaire has been involved in countless volunteer efforts, including several years on the VARD Board of Directors.

A native of Flora, Illinois, Janna's professional career was divided between Parks Administration and college and law school teaching with an emphasis on natural resources and environmental law.

She is a former chair of the board of National Recreation and Parks Association and also served as chair of the Teton County Wyoming Parks Commission. She and her husband have been in the Teton Valley since the late 70's and been full-time residents since 1998. They ski, hike, kayak, and play tennis when not opening the door to let the dog in or out.



Janna holds a flyer from her successful high school student body president campaign. Old habits die hard!



HOA Meeting Coming Up? VARD can help!

Want to know what's going on in Teton Valley and how it affects your neighborhood? Need some advice on how to address issues in the surrounding area? VARD Staff is available to present information and answer any questions your HOA may have. For questions or to schedule a meeting, contact Rachel Daluge at (208) 354-1707 or rachel@tetonvalleyadvocates.org.

VARD Swag on Sale Now!



Vard teamed up with artist Mimi Matsuda to create imagery befitting of VARD's mission and core values. We've placed this imagery on hats, t-shirts, and water bottles, and they can all be yours!

- T-shirts.....\$20
- Hats..... \$10
- Water Bottle.....\$20

To check out Mimi's art, go to www.mimimatsudaart.com

Support
VARD
through
Tin
Cup!



Save the Date! "Conservation Academy" Real Estate Continuing Education Courses October 20 & 21, 2015

Sponsored by Salmon Valley Stewardship and Valley Advocates for Responsible Development

After more than a year of planning, VARD is pleased to co-sponsor two Continuing Education Courses: *Realtor Intro to Conservation Easements* and *Understanding Rural Residential Lot Supply and Marketability*.

These courses will be held at Teton Springs Resort and will offer up to 10 CE hours for both Wyoming & Idaho licensees. For course info, go to tetonvalleyadvocates.org

Get Involved • Become a Member • TETON VALLEY NEEDS YOU!

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- Supporter.....\$50-\$99/year
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