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**Kuna Will Be  
Economically  
Diverse and Vibrant**

# Goal Area 1: Kuna Will Be Economically Diverse and Vibrant.

## Economic Development: Planning Principles

Kuna measures economic development and resiliency by its ability to:

- create jobs
- attract new business and allow existing businesses to grow
- maintain and develop a trained, educated workforce
- increase local wealth and investment
- ensure available land inventory for economic activities in strategic locations
- maintain a diversity of businesses and enterprises
- provide local resources for economic stability and recovery

Planning for economic diversity requires a proactive approach that identifies and mitigates potential threats and disruptions to an economy, and simultaneously encourages business development and workforce trainings that meet the needs of the community and allows for gainful employment for current and future residents. A comprehensive plan can help encourage and align development and land uses to support a broad and diverse workforce, can remove barriers to entrepreneurship, and can support and fund congruent developments that draw business and economic growth to the City.

The City of Kuna has experienced significant change over the past ten years in terms of population growth, household income, housing prices and business growth – important indicators of local economic health.

- Kuna is expected to more than double in population size between now and 2040.<sup>ii</sup>
- Kuna’s current housing options are largely single-family dwellings; a diverse workforce requires more diverse housing opportunities.<sup>iii</sup>
- Kuna’s limited industry profile is concentrated on retail and agriculture, with some professional jobs. Service industry and retail and agricultural jobs typically offer lower-paying wages.<sup>iv</sup>
- Kuna “imports” around 1,500 workers daily from outside the City and exports just over 6,000.<sup>v</sup>
- Residents lack access to locally-based post-secondary education and training opportunities, as well as a limited industry profile.

## Economic Development AT-A-GLANCE:



## Goal 1.A Land use in Kuna will support economic development.

Land use designations have a direct impact on the type of development and growth that occurs throughout the City. Ensuring that land use aligns with the geographic identity of an area is an important part of economic development and as an attractor to businesses and future residents alike. Kuna's downtown is an area primed for revitalization efforts and the City adopted a Downtown Revitalization Plan in 2015. Kuna has major roadways with prime locations for commercial uses that do not conflict with the attractors and type of businesses in the Downtown Core. Additionally, Kuna wants to promote higher paying jobs in the manufacturing and technology industries, which requires future land use and zoning designations that support a mix of industrial uses and compatible adjacent land uses.

### Fast Facts: Economic Development

In 2016, Kuna established an Idaho Economic Development Committee aimed at providing advisory input to economic development matters, as well as serving the promotion and development of economic expansion in Kuna. The committee consists of nine members, including the Mayor of Kuna.

In 2018, an Economic Development Director was hired to focus on strategies for economic growth.

Kuna participates with the Boise Valley Economic Partnership (BVEP), a regional economic development agency for the Boise and Nampa Metropolitan Statistical Areas, and the City of Kuna.



### Objective 1.A.1. Continue to focus on developing Downtown Kuna as a commerce center.

#### *Policies:*

**1.A.1.a.** Continue to implement projects, goals, recommendations and strategies outlined in the Kuna Downtown Revitalization Plan.

**1.A.1.b.** Use placemaking principals and revitalization efforts to ensure Downtown Kuna remains vibrant and active.

**1.A.1.c.** Encourage the creation of businesses focused on entertainment, dining and recreational uses to attract and keep visitors downtown.

**1.A.1.d.** Encourage downtown businesses to incorporate unique character elements that set them apart from larger commercial strip developments in other parts of Kuna.

**1.A.1.e.** Utilize downtown investment programs to revitalize building facades, incorporate art and continue to create attractive amenities in Downtown Kuna.

**1.A.1.f.** Expand the downtown core boundary to include the neighborhood north of 4<sup>th</sup> Street.

**1.A.1.g.** Establish land uses that incorporates Linder Avenue, W 4<sup>th</sup> Street, and Avalon as welcoming Downtown Kuna entrances.

**1.A.1.h.** Expand and enhance the wayfinding system to local businesses, city parking, tourist facilities and attractions in Downtown Kuna.

**1.A.1.i.** Encourage and support cultural and art activities, recognize their contributions to the local economy and incorporate such elements into public and private projects whenever possible.

**1.A.1.j.** Support housing and suitable density in and around Downtown Kuna as part of a revitalization strategy and to promote successful service and entertainment businesses in Downtown Kuna.

**1.A.1.k.** Consider funding mechanisms such as a Business Improvement District (BID), Urban Renewal Agency/District (URA) and/or Community Infrastructure District (CID) to support the maintenance of current investments and promote the creation of new investments.

 **Objective 1.A.2. Create commercial nodes and corridors that support development of economic opportunities that do not compete with Downtown Revitalization efforts.**

**Policies:**

**1.A.2.a.** Designate commercial land use nodes and corridors at strategic locations such as Meridian Road/Highway 69- and Ten-Mile Road.

**1.A.2.b.** Promote and attract larger commercial retailers to designated corridors.

**1.A.2.c.** Focus on development of commercial uses that will not compete with Downtown Kuna's businesses and character.

**1.A.2.d.** Designate a sufficient quantity of land on the Future Land Use Map for commercial use.





### **Objective 1.A.3. Utilize Industrial land use designations to encourage development and expansion of industrial businesses in key locations.**

#### ***Policies:***

**1.A.3.a.** Designate a sufficient quantity of land on the Future Land Use Map for industrial use.

**1.A.3.b.** Identify a large tract of land in proximity to the Union Pacific Railroad Line that is sufficient in size and scope to accommodate a variety of light and heavy industrial land uses that will also have adequate access to Meridian Road/Highway 69, and Kuna-Mora Road and I-84 to the south and east. Assure future industrial lands have sufficient buffer widths to mitigate adjacent or nearby incompatible uses.

**1.A.3.c.** Work with Union Pacific Railroad to identify and market potential industrial lands along the rail line.

**1.A.3.d.** Encourage investment in a railroad spur south of Shortline Street, east of Luker Road, for the industrial area that would connect industrial uses with the Union Pacific Railroad Line.

**1.A.3.e.** Inventory and identify other key parcels for industrial development and poise them to be shovel-ready for development, with access to the City's public facilities, utilities, and services.

**1.A.3.f.** Proactively focus on future planning around public infrastructure to increase the chances of new industrial projects locating to the City of Kuna.

**1.A.3.g.** Inventory and identify key parcels for industrial development/use and poise them to be shovel-ready for agritourism, agri-tainment, healthcare, technology and manufacturing development, with access to the City's public facilities, utilities, and services.<sup>vi</sup>



### **Objective 1.A.4. Administer land use standards and permitting processes in an equitable, cost-effective, and timely manner.**

#### ***Policies:***

**1.A.4.b.** Develop materials to educate developers and builders on land use, entitlement and building permit application processes.

**1.A.4.c.** Encourage pre-application meetings with developers and builders to clarify expectations and increase understanding of relevant plans, policies, codes and development requirements.

**1.A.4.d.** Continue to circulate land use applications and building permit applications (when applicable) to internal City departments.

**1.A.4.e.** Consider initiating electronic land use entitlement and building permit systems to provide flexibility, improve record-keeping, create efficiencies and foster transparency.

**1.A.4.f.** Provide up-to-date maps and permitting information to the public through web-based programs.

## **Goal 1.B Support development of a skilled, talented and trained workforce.**

Kuna has a growing and diverse workforce, but a shifting local economy has created a mismatch between workforce skills and job opportunities. Kuna is anticipated to lose 18% of its crop and animal production jobs by 2024 and is expected to grow 14% in the realm of government jobs, which includes healthcare. A majority of Kuna’s workforce leaves Kuna to access jobs in Meridian, Eagle, Boise and Nampa. Roughly 6,044 employees commute out of Kuna each day, 1,573 individuals commute to Kuna from the surrounding area, and 477 individuals commute within Kuna.<sup>vii</sup> Providing workforce development and training programs within Kuna would provide jobs and foster a growing, skilled workforce within Kuna.



### **Objective 1.B.1. Improve accessibility to training and education opportunities.**

#### ***Policies:***

**1.B.1.a.** Work cooperatively with local schools to maintain and enhance the quality of K-12 education in the School Districts.

**1.B.1.b.** Work with School Districts and local businesses to create opportunities for students to experience and explore a wide variety of career and employment opportunities.

**1.B.1.c.** Support partnerships between Kuna High School and technical and post-secondary schools.

**1.B.1.d.** Ensure adequate resources are devoted to providing grants and scholarships to individuals seeking additional training.

**1.B.1.e.** Encourage the Kuna School District and other educational entities to offer and expand vocational and technical education programs.

**1.B.1.f.** Utilize State incentive programs and funding to remove barriers to accessing and paying for workforce development trainings.



### **Objective 1.B.2. Create additional workforce development opportunities via partnerships and extension offices.**

#### ***Policies:***

**1.B.2.a.** Work with the Idaho Department of Labor to access the workforce development training fund for new and expanding businesses.

**1.B.2.b.** Coordinate with educational institutions such as the College of Western Idaho or University of Idaho to establish new extension/satellite offices and training facilities in Kuna.

➔ **Objective 1.B.3. Ensure training and workforce development opportunities match the needs of Kuna employers.**

*Policies:*

**1.B.3.a.** Emphasize transferable skills and structured training programs.

**1.B.3.b.** Regularly evaluate the needs of Kuna employers to ensure resources and trainings are in line with employment trends.

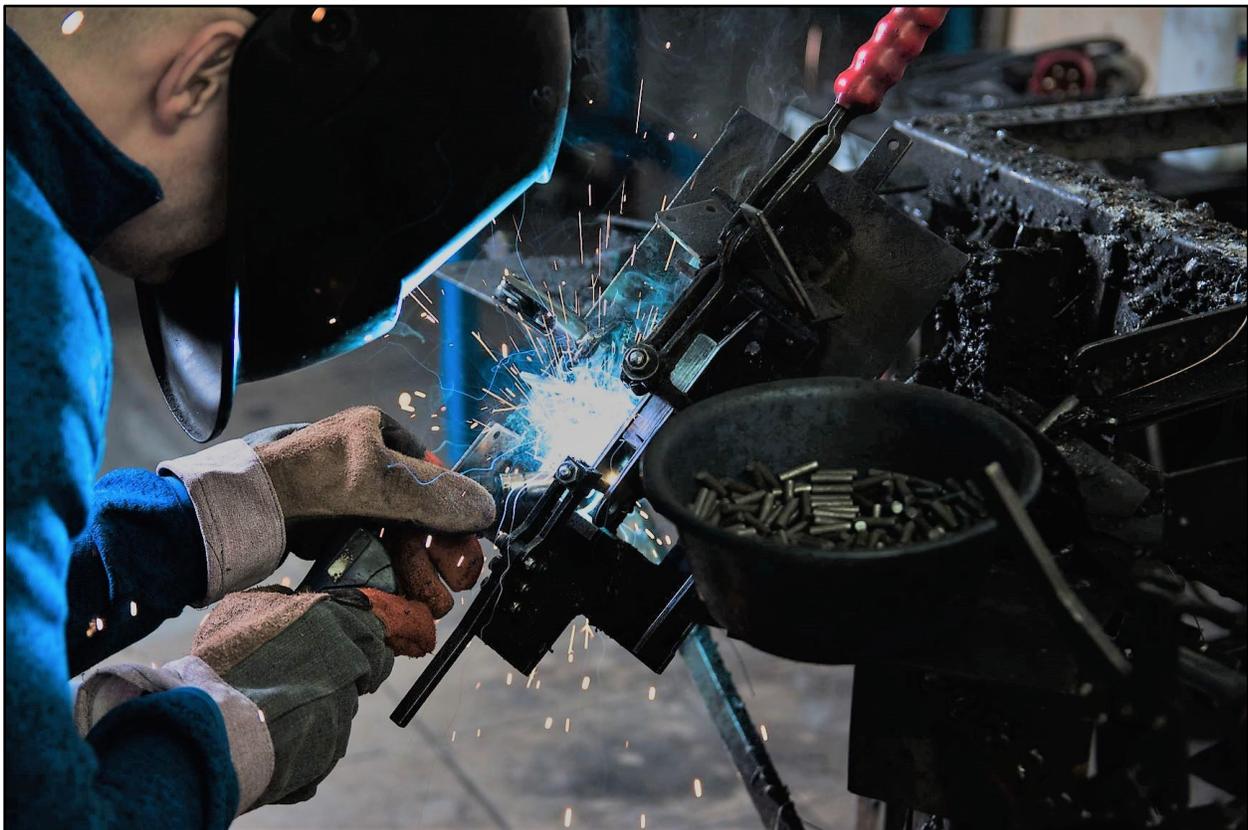
➔ **Objective 1.B.4. Support efforts to provide training and employment opportunities for special needs populations and disenfranchised groups.**

*Policies:*

**1.B.4.a.** Collaborate with partner agencies and businesses to establish a veteran’s workforce development fund to address the needs of veterans entering the Kuna workforce.

**1.B.4.b.** Attract and incentivize workforce development trainings, educational and employment opportunities that are inclusive to all individuals.

**1.B.4.c.** Emphasize the importance of training and employment services that provide youth with special needs opportunities to transition from a classroom setting to a workplace.



## **Goal 1.C Attract and encourage new and existing businesses.**

Even though Kuna is home to over 200 commercial and in-home businesses that offer a diversity of retail, dining, and other services, these businesses do not provide adequate employment opportunities for Kuna residents. Attracting new businesses and retaining and expanding existing businesses will be an essential component of Kuna’s economic growth strategy. Kuna has available resources including land and a ready workforce to attract new businesses; however, additional incentives and a targeted business growth/attraction strategy will help ensure Kuna attracts businesses and entrepreneurial ventures that will allow the community to steer away from being viewed a bedroom community and see growth that aligns with Kuna’s values and character.



### **Objective 1.C.1. Provide incentives and/or assistance for targeted industries and new markets.**

#### ***Policies:***

**1.C.1.a.** Consider funding mechanisms such as a Business Improvement District (BID), Urban Renewal Agency/District (URA) and/or Community Infrastructure District (CID) to support the maintenance of current investments and promote the creation of new investments.

**1.C.1.b.** Ensure transportation and communications infrastructure meets or exceeds industry expectations.

**1.C.1.c.** Regularly evaluate and update the list of targeted industries, professional services and supports to include for new and developing industries that could be beneficial for Kuna’s economy.

**1.C.1.d.** Assess all new businesses with a large potential economic impact under a cost-benefits analysis approach. Calculate the rate of return and impact of incentives.

**1.C.1.e.** Develop a targeted strategy that matches the incentive program to the needs of priority industries.

**1.C.1.f.** Regularly re-evaluate business attraction and retention incentives to ensure they are beneficial to the City’s revenue streams and growth strategy. Apply incentives in a reasonable manner with short-term and, long-term benefits when appropriate.



### **Objective 1.C.2. Create an environment that is friendly to business creation, expansion and relocation.**

#### ***Policies:***

**1.C.2.a.** Create a repository of existing businesses within the community and conduct regular visits and surveys to understand barriers, likelihood of expansion and/or ways to improve the business environment in Kuna.

**1.C.2.b.** To the extent possible, ensure that tax policies help attract and retain businesses.

**1.C.2.c.** Provide tools and services to existing and new businesses to reach new customers, broader markets and realize efficiencies.

**1.C.2.d.** Ensure infrastructure and public facilities are in place and that parcels identified for commercial or industrial use are shovel-ready.

 **Objective 1.C.3. Create and maintain a marketing/recruitment plan aimed at new business growth or relocation to Kuna.**

**Policies:**

**1.C.3.a.** Consider the creation of a business incubator and makerspace<sup>viii</sup>.

**1.C.3.b.** Actively recruit new businesses by working with Idaho State agencies and Boise Valley Economic Partnership, pursue grant opportunities and private/public partnerships.

**1.C.3.c.** Utilize Kuna’s distinct rural community and access to recreational opportunities to attract location-neutral businesses.

**1.C.3.d.** Utilize Kuna’s unique environment and assets to help create regional industry clusters centered around agricultural production, agricultural tourism and niche food/beverage production.

**1.C.3.e.** Assess current market demand for agricultural tourism and agricultural entertainment and utilize data to build regional collaborations.

**1.C.3.f.** Establish a list of priority industry areas and reach out to existing/emerging businesses within these industries to highlight Kuna as a desirable location for expansion/relocation.

 **Objective 1.C.4. Focus on the creation and retention of businesses that provide livable wage positions to Kuna residents.**

**Policies:**

**1.B.4.a.** Diversify and expand the city’s job base, with a focus on attracting higher paying jobs, to allow people to both work and live in the community. <sup>ix</sup>

**1.B.4.b.** Offer incentives to businesses looking to expand that pay above the median individual income rate for the City of Kuna. The 2017 estimated median earnings for full-time year round workers is \$41,788.<sup>x</sup>

**1.B.4.c.** Conduct regular assessments of wages and opportunities within Kuna. Assess salary rates based on cost of living indexes and wages in surrounding jurisdictions. Ensure Kuna’s employment opportunities match or exceed surrounding area averages.

**1.B.4.d.** Develop a policy that provides incentives and/or assistance for industries in targeted clusters, such as high-technology jobs and jobs in environmentally clean manufacturing sectors.

## Goal 1.D Address and plan for economic expansion of the City and Region.

The City of Kuna and the Boise-Nampa Metropolitan Statistical Area are quickly growing in both population and economic size. By 2040 Ada County will have 101.5% more jobs than it had in 2016, and Kuna is expected to increase the number of total jobs by 471.5% by 2040.<sup>xi</sup> This rapid population and employment growth creates opportunities for the City of Kuna to help shape the type, size and locations of industries in the community.



### **Objective 1.D.1. Seek opportunities to partner and promote the regions recreation, tourism and outdoor amenities.**

#### ***Policies:***

**1.D.1.a.** Encourage communication between various stakeholders to establish public/private partnerships in community development matters.

**1.D.1.b.** Continuously evaluate regional and local comprehensive and economic development plans to understand the positioning and strengths of the regional economy and areas of opportunity for Kuna.

**1.D.1.c.** Participate in regional planning processes that evaluate land use scenarios to determine growth outcomes and regional needs.

**1.D.1.d.** Integrate regional economic development plans and initiatives with existing regional transportation planning efforts to ensure strong transportation/land use coordination.

**1.D.1.e.** Meet with local and regional economic development commissions and supportive agencies to identify opportunities for partnership.

**1.D.1.f.** Actively recruit new businesses by working with Idaho State agencies, pursue grant opportunities and private/public partnerships.



### **Objective 1.D.2. Support efforts of the Economic Development Director and Economic Development Committee.**

#### ***Policies:***

**1.D.2.a.** Develop and adopt an Economic Development Strategic Plan with clear goals, objectives, initiatives and capital projects.

**1.D.2.b.** Ensure that recommendations from the Kuna's Economic Development Committee align with regional and city growth strategies.

**1.D.2.c.** Invite new members from partner agencies and other local governments to participate/provide input to the Economic Development Committee.

**1.D.2.d.** Continually invest in economic development efforts such as capital projects, infrastructure and utilities expansion, market studies, marketing and public relations, business retention and recruitment efforts and support of entrepreneurship.

## Economically Diverse and Vibrant: Implementation

The table on the next page shows specific projects and actions identified during the comprehensive plan process that would help achieve the goals, objectives, and policies related to this topic area. The top projects and actions for this goal area are listed below. For the purposes of the Comprehensive plan, a priority project is any project or action that the city has identified as actionable within the next one-to-three years and is anticipated to receive resource allocations to help achieve its implementation. These priority projects will help guide short-term implementation of this plan., If a project is not included on the priority projects list that does not preclude it from short-term implementation or resource allocation.

### Top Priority Economic Development Projects and Actions

1. Develop a strategic coordinated Strategic Economic Development Plan.
2. Develop a Kuna business retention and attraction plan.
3. Educate city staff and City Council members on CID, BID, Urban Renewal or other tools for funding as a developer infrastructure funding mechanism.
4. Develop an incentives program to competitively attract and retain new businesses
5. Conduct a communications, transportation and public infrastructure assessment on future/key industrial areas
6. Work with Ada County and incorporated cities to create a regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)
7. Conduct a Kuna specific industry analysis that highlights market demand, assets and risks.

*Projects and Actions Table 1* on the following page highlights all the projects and actions that have been identified to implement the objectives and policies in this goal area and includes the top priority projects listed above. Other projects and policies that are priorities for the City may not be listed in the table as they are less likely to be actionable implementation items.

### Key Economically Diverse and Vibrant Policy Focus Areas:

Core guiding policy areas for objectives, policies and actions related to this goal area include.

1. Land use regulation and support
2. Workforce development
3. Business attraction and retention
4. Economic growth management and anticipation

# Projects and Actions Table 1: Economically Diverse and Vibrant

Goals	Projects and Actions
<p><b>1.A Land use in Kuna will support economic development.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply for grants to implement downtown Kuna projects.</li> <li>• Develop a strategic, coordinated Strategic Economic Development Plan.</li> <li>• Educate city staff and City Council members on CID, BID, Urban Renewal or other tools for funding as a developer infrastructure funding mechanism.</li> <li>• Conduct an Urban Renewal Agency/District study.</li> <li>• Upgrade City permitting systems.</li> </ul>
<p><b>1.B Support development of a skilled, talented and trained workforce.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create an annual report on the City’s workforce strengths and challenges.</li> </ul>
<p><b>1.C Attract and encourage new and existing businesses.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a Kuna business retention and attraction plan.</li> <li>• Create an existing business repository.</li> <li>• Develop an incentives program to competitively attract and retain new businesses.</li> <li>• Educate city staff and City Council members on CID, BID, Urban Renewal or other tools for funding as a developer infrastructure funding mechanism.</li> <li>• Conduct a communications, transportation and public infrastructure assessment on future/key industrial areas in collaboration with the appropriate agencies.</li> <li>• Create a focus group and plan to identify viable and implementable agritourism and agri-tainment opportunities and partnerships.</li> <li>• Develop a policy for how the City of Kuna will provide a local match for companies that qualify for the Tax Reimbursement incentive through Idaho Commerce.</li> <li>• Conduct a business incubator feasibility study.</li> <li>• Conduct a Kuna specific industry analysis that highlights market demand, assets and risks.</li> </ul>
<p><b>1.D Address and plan for economic expansion of the City and region.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with Ada County and incorporated Cities to create a regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).</li> <li>• Work with partner agencies and jurisdictions to create a regional projects list to guide long-term economic expansion.</li> </ul>