



River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan



Prepared by Capital City Development Corporation

Boise, Idaho
Adopted by Boise City Council
November 30, 2004

Approved by the Boise City Council

(with supplemental changes to the August 23, 2004 version
approved by the CCDC Board of Commissioners – see Appendix C)

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1: Introduction



Situated on the Boise River and nestled against the foothills, Boise became a town in 1863 with the platting of ten city blocks. Boise and its surrounding cities have grown to be the largest metropolitan area in the region and downtown Boise is the center for business, government, education and culture.

The River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Renewal District was formed in December 1994 and consisted of 242 acres more or less bounded by Grove and Front streets, Broadway Avenue and River and 16th streets. The district parallels the Boise River along its entire southern edge, and is bisected by Capitol Boulevard, which runs north from the Boise Depot on the bench to the Idaho State Capitol building. Figure 1 shows the boundaries of the existing River Street–Myrtle Street district along with parcels added as part of this master planning process.

History of the River Street–Myrtle Street Area

This area has a rich history from early settlement through the railroad era to the present day. The place that would become Boise began as a gathering place for Shoshoni and Bannock tribes to barter goods. Trappers seeking furs arrived on the scene in the early 1800s. The first Fort Boise was built at the mouth of the Boise River by the Hudson Bay Company in 1834, approximately 45 miles

west of Boise's present-day location. It served as a trading post and later a way station for the first immigrants on the Oregon Trail. The discovery of gold in the Boise River Basin in 1862 brought thousands of adventurers to the area, some of whom became settlers. On July 4, 1863, Major Pinckney Lugenbeel chose the site for the second Fort Boise. The new fort was to be against the Boise foothills just west of Cottonwood Creek one-half mile from what became the Boise City town site. "A few settlers already had crops growing without irrigation along the (Boise) river. There was adequate grazing for livestock, and an abundant supply of sandstone for building purposes."¹ "On July 7, 1863, Boise held its first town meeting and, the next day, platted 10 city blocks between the river and the foothills."²

Much of the land in what became the River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Renewal District was in the floodplain of the Boise River, so it was used for farming and orchards in the early days. At the time, this area was considered to be on the outskirts of town. Changes began in the 1880s with the coming of the railroad. First, a branch of the Oregon Short Line railroad was built from Nampa to Boise in 1887, which terminated at a modest shack on the bench east of the Boise Depot's current location. Then in 1894, "trains came downtown along Front Street to a handsome new station" located between 9th and 10th streets.³ The blocks between Front and Myrtle streets became rail yards and the area between Capitol Boulevard and 9th Street south of Front Street filled with warehouses that are still evident today.

At the turn of the century, a middle class neighborhood appeared in the west end of the district and became known as the River Street neighborhood. A significant feature was Riverside Park, on the northeast corner of 11th and River streets. The park included a baseball field, with covered seating for one thousand; a covered outdoor theater, with 700 seats; and a two-story dance pavilion, with dining on the second floor. The park was a major entertainment center in the early 1900s, offering opera, musicales, vaudeville, dancing and popular baseball games.

In 1907, Thomas Jefferson Davis donated 87 acres along the Boise River for parkland, in honor of his wife, Julia. Julia Davis Park now adjoins the east end of the River Street–Myrtle Street district and has become the location of many cultural and educational institutions of statewide importance. These include the Boise Art Museum, Idaho State Historical Museum, Idaho Black History Museum, Discovery Center of Idaho and Zoo Boise. A second neighborhood of modest homes developed between the park and Front Street, now referred to as the Parkside neighborhood.

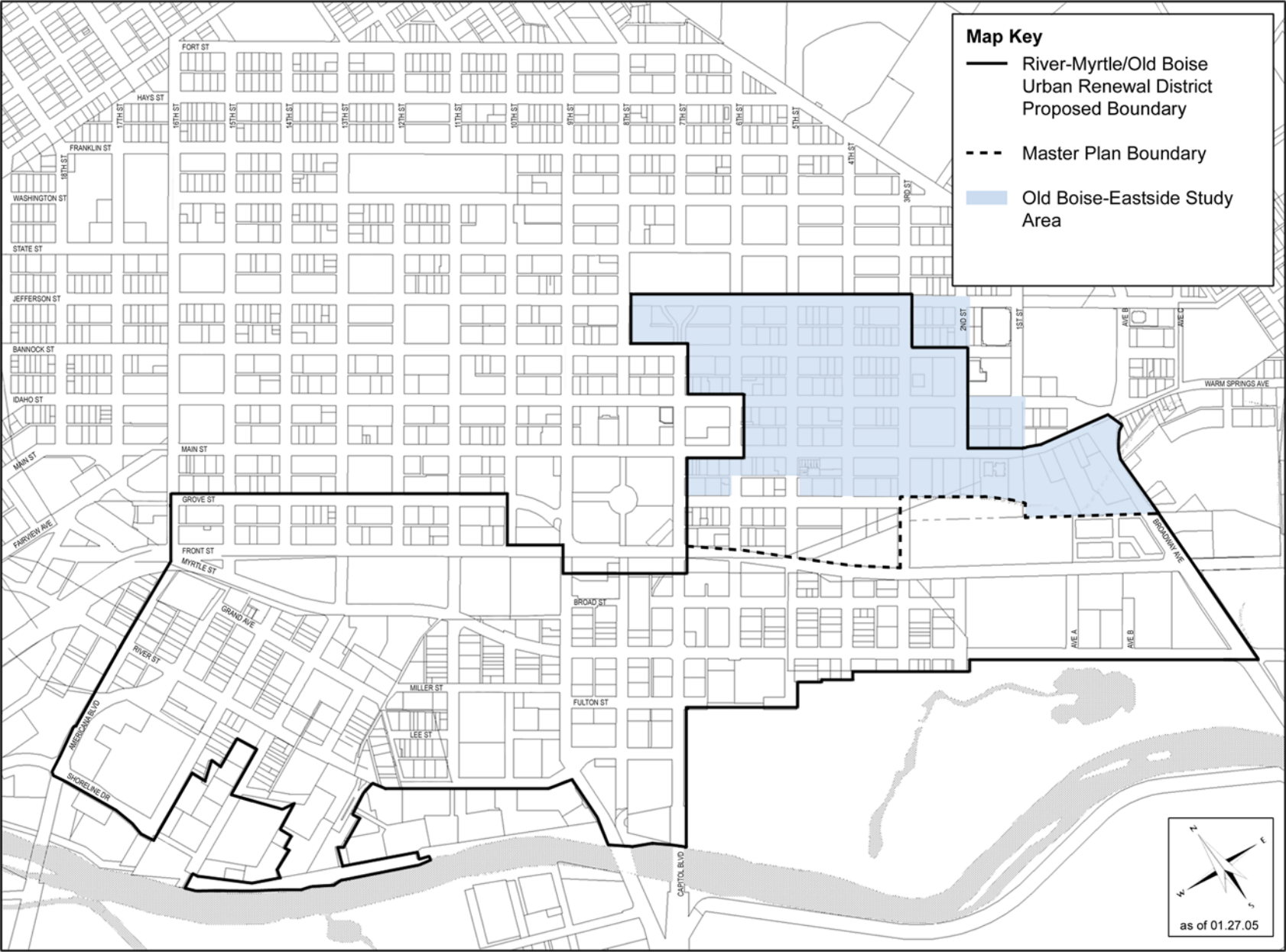
Disintegration of the River Street and Parkside neighborhoods was brought on by economic downturns; an increase in rail traffic that put these neighborhoods on the wrong side of the tracks; and a perceived need for more industrial space that led to a 1928 zoning change allowing industrial and commercial uses in these neighborhoods. The migration of the more prosperous families to Boise's East End and elsewhere added to the decline of these older neighborhoods.

¹ Source: Arthur H. Hart, *Historic Boise*, Historic Idaho, Inc. (1993), p. 10.

² Source: Barbara Herrick, *Boise: A Global Community in the West*, Community Communications, Inc. (1996), P. 17.

³ Source: Arthur H. Hart, *Historic Boise*, Historic Idaho, Inc. (1993), p. 30.

Figure 1: Additions to the River Street–Myrtle Street District



World War II brought the construction of Gowen Field, a B-24 bomber-training site south of Boise, and with it an enormous influx of servicemen and their families to town. The well-worn housing stock in the River Street and Parkside neighborhoods offered cheap rentals for these newcomers, including for the first time black residents. The River Street neighborhood has remained integrated to the present.

Lucky Peak Dam was completed in 1955, reducing the area subject to flooding in the River Street–Myrtle Street district and making more intensive development possible. By the end of the 1970s the North Bank Project brought \$1.4 million in federal Community Development Block Grant Funds to the River Street neighborhood. The funds were used to extend the Boise River Greenbelt, paint the 8th Street Bridge, build a footbridge to Ann Morrison Park and construct the Pioneer Walkway.

Creation of the River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Renewal District

The Boise City Council created the River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Renewal District in 1994 to respond to the following issues:

- **Construction of the Broadway–Chinden Connector.** The connector consists of two one-way roadways—each having five lanes—that form a ground-level couplet running from Broadway Avenue to 13th Street where they join together and continue as a grade-separated interstate highway to I-84. One of the reasons for building the connector was to redirect the traffic using Idaho and Main streets as a route through downtown to a higher capacity roadway that was outside the central business district (CBD).

The connector improved automobile access to, from and through downtown, but it also created a concern about how adjacent properties would be developed. The connector bordered the area where the rail yards had been abandoned, leaving large blocks of undeveloped land. The connector gave these properties increased visibility to automobile traffic. There was a concern that development of these properties would be dominated by suburban-style, strip commercial uses that would separate the central business district from the Boise River, Julia Davis Park and the two neighborhoods. Preparing

an urban design plan for the area, and creating an urban renewal district, provided a way to describe the community's goals for the area and to guide new development and redevelopment in a more urban direction. It also generated resources that could be invested in the area to stimulate the desired type of development.

- **A desire to protect investments made in the downtown core.** Revitalization efforts in the CBD had resulted in substantial private and public investment in property development and infrastructure. Forming an urban renewal district in the adjacent River Street–Myrtle Street area, was seen as a way to assure that redevelopment of this area would complement the work already done in the CBD, reconnect the two areas and extend the vitality of the downtown core into the River Street–Myrtle Street area.
- **A desire to create a model promoting a more sustainable development pattern for the future.** Consistent with national trends, most of the growth in Boise since the 1960s has favored automobile-dependent suburban neighborhoods at the community's edge. The negative consequences of this pattern have received more and more attention as the roadways and other public facilities and service systems become overloaded and traffic and air pollution increase. At the time the River Street–Myrtle Street Urban

Renewal District was formed, there was a desire to use this area as a place to demonstrate an alternative. The urban renewal plan envisioned creation of a series of subdistricts where mixed-use, infill neighborhoods with pedestrian-friendly streets could be created. These neighborhoods could accommodate a considerable number of housing units, along with commercial uses, within walking distance of downtown employment centers and the cultural, educational and recreational opportunities along the Boise River.

Updating the River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Design Plan

Idaho Code requires an urban renewal plan be created when an urban renewal district is established. The typical time frame for an urban renewal plan is 24 years. An essential element of this urban renewal plan is a master plan which states the desired future character for the district and sets forth a development concept, objectives and guidelines to assist decision makers with the physical redevelopment and development of the district. It also includes action steps as to how urban renewal resources should be applied to achieve plan objectives. The River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Design Plan was prepared in 1994 to articulate the vision and desired outcomes for the River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Renewal District. The Boise City Council approved the urban design plan when it created the district, and later, the council adopted the urban design plan as part of the 1997 Boise City Comprehensive Plan.

The intervening years since 1994 have brought new insights into the issues this plan needs to address. The more significant issues are highlighted below.

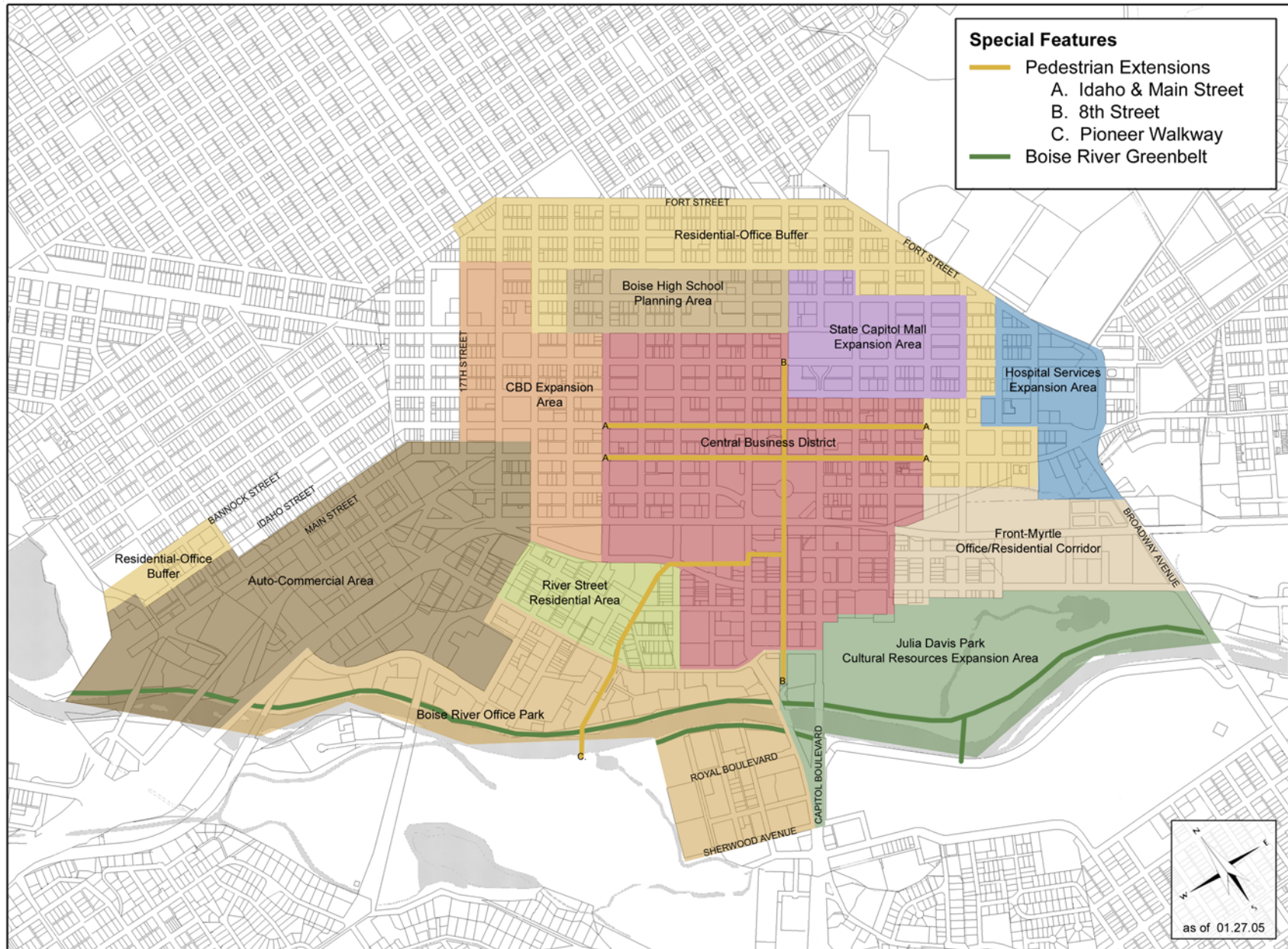
- **A more expansive view of downtown.** As Boise City has grown, so has its downtown. The geographic area that is regarded as downtown Boise has been expanding over time. In 1993, Boise City adopted the Downtown Boise Plan, which included a map showing the area considered to be the logical future extent of the downtown (see Figure 2). This area extends from Fort Street on the north to the Royal Boulevard commercial district south of the Boise River, and from Broadway and Avenue B on the east to 17th Street on the west, and then extending along Main and Fairview to the Boise River west of 30th Street. Downtown Boise Mobility Study Area, established in 2002, envisioned downtown as also including Ann Morrison Park and the Boise State University campus but only goes west to 27th Street (see Figure 3).

Downtown is becoming much more than just the central business district. It is transforming into a series of subdistricts that include the CBD but also specialized places like the Cultural District, Ada County Courthouse Corridor and in-town residential neighborhoods. It has become important that connections be created between these subdistricts while encouraging them to become distinctive places that have their own identity. Ultimately, there is a desire to have downtown function as an integrated and organic whole that remains healthy and prosperous over time. This plan update recognizes the River–Myrtle

area as an integral part of downtown Boise and identifies ways to connect this area to the other activity centers in downtown. It also gives more attention to recognizing and strengthening the subdistricts in the River–Myrtle area, and to creating vibrant places where people can live, work and play within this part of downtown.

- **A need to respond to a changing economy.** The American economy continues its shift away from resource production and manufacturing to information technology and this change is nowhere more dramatic than in Idaho. In spite of traditions and lingering perceptions, the technology sector now contributes more to the state's gross economic product than agriculture, timber and mining combined. The new economy is focused on innovation in high tech and other industries, and its resource base is people: mobile, well-educated knowledge workers. Creating a place that is attractive to this new economy is a top priority in economic development efforts nationwide, and is the driving force behind the Boise Smart City Initiative. The Smart City project, originated by the Boise Mayor's Office and CCDC in 2000, is a citizen-led effort to identify what the people of the new economy are looking for in a place to live and work, and to create such a place in Boise. The Smart City project focused initially on the River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Renewal District as a place that could become a model for the application of Smart City ideas. Recommendations generated by this effort are reflected in the development guidelines and action steps that appear later in this plan.
- **Importance of creating sustainable places.** It

Figure 2: Downtown Boise Plan (1993) – Land Use



was recently reported that Boise is the most sprawling city in the Pacific Northwest.¹ Sprawl puts pressure on resources, especially water, building materials, roads and fossil fuels. It also tends to produce more air pollution and traffic congestion, while consuming farmland close to metropolitan centers. Creating urban centers where places to live, work and play are concentrated and where people can make connections by walking, bicycling and using transit is seen as an effective antidote to sprawl. Downtown Boise and the neighborhoods immediately surrounding it are viewed as having a more sustainable pattern than is typical of the rest of the Treasure Valley. This update places greater emphasis on the issue of sustainability in the development objectives and action steps for the River Street–Myrtle Street planning area.²

- **Growing interest in downtown living.** Many metropolitan cities in the United States have experienced a surge of housing development in their urban centers. Portland, Seattle, Denver, Los Angeles and other cities are experiencing a renaissance of downtown living, which appears tied to the steady reduction in household size, a desire

for more stimulating living environments, reduced commuting distances and the availability of jobs in the CBD. The 2003 Downtown Housing Market Analysis compared downtown Boise to four other cities where downtown housing has accelerated and noted that Boise shares many of the same characteristics. The analysis concluded that there is most likely a pent-up demand for downtown housing in Boise. The Downtown Boise Housing Survey conducted in 2004 estimates that there are 5,000 one- and two-person households in Boise and Ada County that would consider moving to downtown Boise in the next 2-3 years, if housing choices were made available.³

Increasing the supply of housing in downtown Boise is seen as essential to maintaining and increasing vitality, reducing air pollution and traffic congestion and creating a more livable community. Specific steps for developing a much larger supply of housing in the River Street–Myrtle Street area, especially in the Cultural District and River Street neighborhood, receive much more attention in this update than in the previous River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Design Plan.

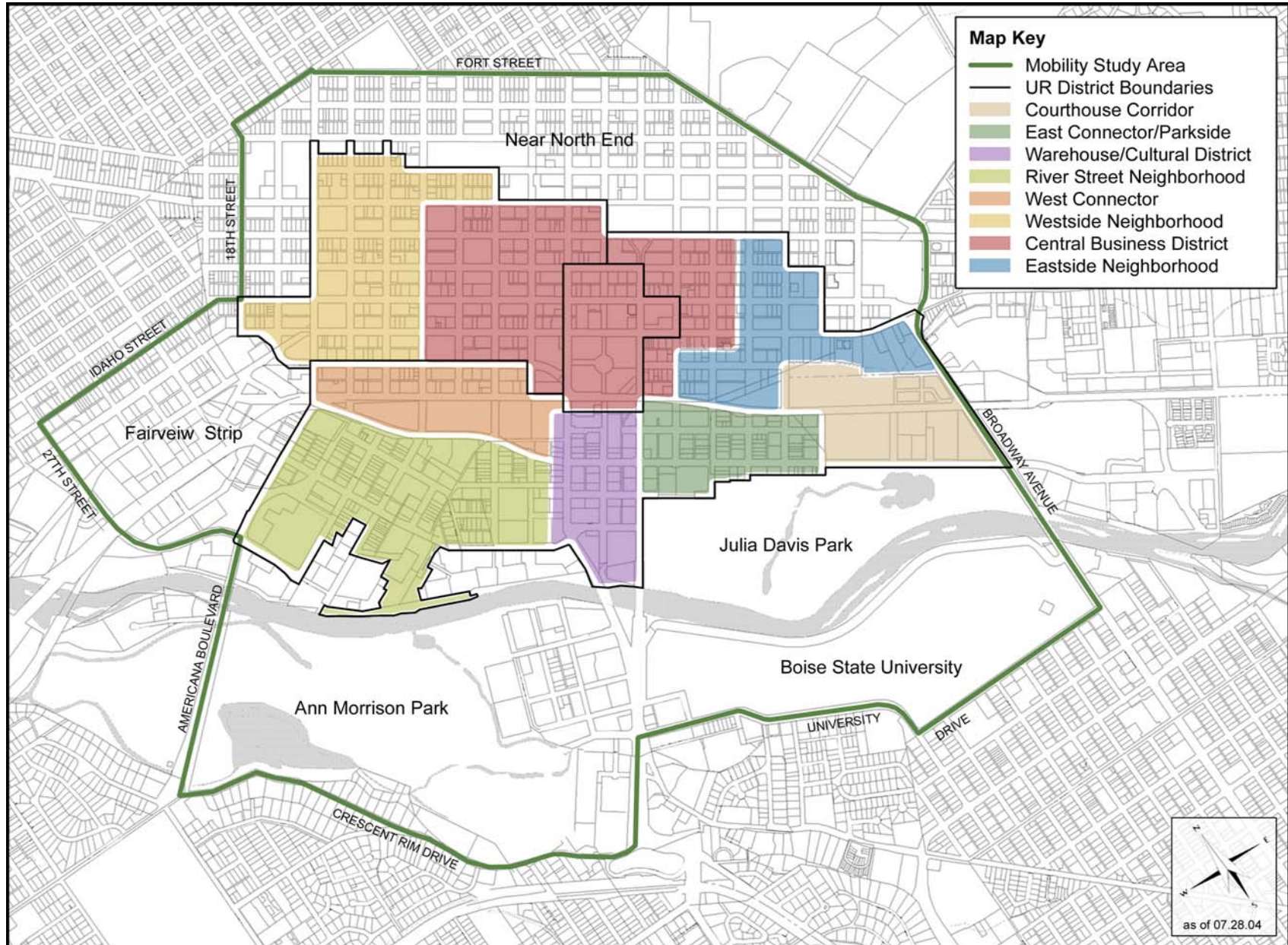
- **Recognizing changes in the River Street–**

¹ Source: Northwest Environment Watch (http://www.northwestwatch.org/scorecard/map1_boise.asp) as reported by Joe Kolman, “Boise Sprawls the most in the Pacific Northwest,” Idaho Statesman, March 3, 2004, p. 1.

² Since the River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Renewal District was created in 1994, it has been amended to include the Old Boise–Eastside area. Two planning areas were created within the boundary of the larger district: River–Myrtle planning area and the Old Boise–Eastside planning area. The River–Myrtle planning area covers five of the seven subdistricts in the River Myrtle–Old Boise Urban Renewal District (see Figure 11.)

³ This conclusion was based on data collected by Clearwater Research by telephone from one- and two-person households in Boise City (400 households) and Ada County (200 households), which formed a scientific sample from which projections could be made. This was the sample used to estimate that 5,000 one- and two-person households would consider moving to downtown Boise in the next 2-3 years. In addition, results were also obtained from approximately 800 participants who took the survey either on the Internet or by completing a paper survey. The Internet-based and paper surveys were distributed primarily to people working in downtown Boise. Approximately two-thirds of these participants said they would consider moving to downtown Boise in the next 2-3 years.

Figure 3: Downtown Boise Mobility Study Area & Urban Renewal (UR) Districts



Myrtle Street district. Many changes have occurred in the River Street–Myrtle Street district that were not anticipated in the original plan. These include construction of the Ada County Courthouse, Civic Plaza Apartments, Idaho Water Center, the Kriezenbeck office building and Winco food store; the groundbreaking for the BoDo retail development at 8th and Broad streets; the opening of the Fulton Street Theater and Big Easy Concert House; and the creation of the Pioneer Corridor plan and CCDC’s downtown housing initiative. Expansion of the Boise Centre on the Grove (Convention Center), which was planned for a site between Front, 11th, Myrtle and 13th streets, suffered reverses at the polls and it is now uncertain if it will expand and where. More is known about how the River Street–Myrtle Street district will develop in the future, and the plan needs to reflect the changes that have developed over the years. Issues that have emerged and need more attention since the original River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Design Plan was adopted include:

- Development in the Ada County Courthouse Corridor
- Concentration of destination retail, entertainment and cultural uses in and near the historic 8th Street Marketplace
- Questions regarding the convention center expansion and how it affects development between Front and Myrtle west of 9th Street
- More emphasis on housing development in the River Street and Parkside neighborhoods with the launch of the Boise Downtown Housing Initiative
- Clearer picture of how the Pioneer Walkway

could be improved to create a grand boulevard-style pedestrian and bicycle link

- **Making the plan more thorough and easier to use.** The original River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Design Plan focused on three framework issues: mixed uses, open space and pedestrian elements, and street character. It also identified five subdistricts, described their existing character and recommended actions for the future. The streetscaping standards either specified brick or allowed for brick to be used as an upgrade for almost all of the streets in the River Street–Myrtle Street district. In Boise, the master plans for the urban renewal districts are used on a regular basis to evaluate development proposals for their consistency with plan objectives. Over the last ten years, it has become evident that more specific information is needed to do these evaluations than is available in the River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Design Plan.

This update provides more specific information, especially on land uses and densities and how the subdistricts are to be differentiated from one another. It also has a clearer set of development guidelines and includes revised streetscape standards that select certain streets to be improved using brick sidewalks and others to be improved using modularly scored concrete to create more continuity of treatment and to contain costs.

This River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan serves as the update to the River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Design Plan. It covers all of the subdistricts identified in the

earlier plan with the exception of the Old Boise Expansion Area. This area is covered by the Old Boise–Eastside Master Plan, a companion document to this plan (see pp. 11-14 for more information). Some of the subdistricts have been renamed as noted in the outline below, and a new subdistrict has been added for the Courthouse Corridor. For the remainder of this plan, in order to avoid confusion, the area covered by this plan is referred to as the River–Myrtle planning area. The River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan addresses:

- Eligibility for Urban Renewal Activities
- Planning & Policy Context
- Market Context
- Preferred Development Concept
- Overall Plans, Guidelines & Action Steps
 - Preferred Development Concept
 - Preservation, Revitalization & Renewal
 - Building & Site Design
 - Street Character, Civic Spaces & Pedestrian Ways
 - Transportation & Parking
- Subdistrict Plans, Guidelines & Action Steps¹
 - West Connector (Former Rail Yards)²
 - River Street Neighborhood
 - Warehouse/Cultural District
 - East Connector/Parkside³
 - Courthouse Corridor
 - Old Boise–Eastside
- Implementation

Use of subdistrict plans

Because of the large size of the River–Myrtle planning area, it has been divided into subdistricts, each of which has a plan describing current conditions, objectives, development guidelines and action steps. These subdistrict plans appear in Chapter 7.

Old Boise–Eastside as part of the River Street–Myrtle Street District

Preparing this update of the River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Design Plan was precipitated in part by work being done to evaluate an adjacent area—the Old Boise–Eastside area—for formation of a separate urban renewal district. Both of these areas are shown in Figure 1. CCDC began the evaluation of the Old Boise–Eastside area at the request of property owners in Old Boise commercial area. Idaho State Code requires that an area must meet at least one of the criteria in the definition of a deteriorated or deteriorating area before it is eligible to become an urban renewal district. The CCDC Board of Commissioners received an eligibility report on the Old Boise–Eastside area in September 2001, which concluded that the area met the requirements of the Idaho State Code. In September 2002, the Boise City Council received this report, made a finding that the area was eligible for urban renewal activities and directed CCDC to prepare a master plan for consideration by the city council.

¹ The original 1994 River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Design Plan included a subdistrict called Old Boise Expansion Area in addition to others listed in this master plan. This area is now considered to be part of Old Boise–Eastside Planning Area, which is covered by its own master plan. This subdistrict no longer discussed in the River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan although there is a brief reference to it in the chapter on subdistrict plans. Please see the Old Boise–Eastside Master Plan for more information on this subdistrict.

² Designated as the CBD Expansion Area in the 1994 River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Design Plan.

³ Designated as Myrtle Street North of Julia Davis Park in the 1994 River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Design Plan.

Tax Increment Financing

Tax increment financing (or revenue allocation as it is called in the Idaho State Code) is the method established for funding revitalization projects and activities in urban renewal districts. At the time an urban renewal district is established, a city council also decides whether to create a revenue allocation area that coincides with the district. If this area is created, the county assessor establishes the current value for each property in the district. This value is referred to as the *base value*. Over time, as both public and private dollars are invested and development occurs in the district, property values tend to rise. The increase in value over the base is called the *incremental value* or increment. In Idaho, the taxes generated by this incremental value are shared by the school district and the urban renewal agency. In Boise, the city council has formed revenue allocation areas for each of its urban renewal districts. The revenues derived from the increment for urban renewal activities are allocated to CCDC as Boise's urban renewal agency.

CCDC proceeded with preparation of the master plan. Idaho State Code also requires that an economic feasibility analysis be done before a district is formed to determine how anticipated revenues compare to estimated costs for revitalization projects and programs. In the case of Old Boise–Eastside, a preliminary analysis was done in spring 2003. It showed that anticipated tax increment revenues from Old Boise–Eastside might not be enough to cover the expected cost of improvements (see sidebar).

At the time, some of the factors seen as reasons for this situation were:

- Constructing at least one public parking garage and upgrading the Old Boise business district to have the same streetscaping and pedestrian amenities as the downtown core was expensive.
- Old Boise–Eastside does not have large unused parcels that could generate significant new development.
- The preferred development concept for Old Boise–Eastside endeavored to complement the existing character of the area and thus shows only a modest amount of new development.
- The amount of tax increment expected from the preferred development concept for Old Boise–Eastside was correspondingly modest.

Amending the River Street–Myrtle Street District to include Old Boise/Eastside

To address this situation, the CCDC Board of Commissioners decided to evaluate what the financial situation would be if the Old Boise–Eastside area were added to the existing River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Renewal District.

The possibility of combining the two areas meant that the River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Renewal Plan including the master plan and financial plan needed to be brought up-to-date. Hence the preparation of this River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan.

Adding Old Boise–Eastside to the River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Renewal District offered the following advantages:

- The number and size of parcels suitable for redevelopment varies between different geographic areas of downtown Boise. As a result, the redevelopment potential and the ability to generate tax increment varies between these areas. The need for improvements in different geographic areas also varies. There are instances where the ability to generate revenue and the need for improvements are not a perfect match. Having a larger land area in an urban renewal district tends to moderate these differences and allows a balance between costs and revenues to be achieved.

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- Certain types of improvements, such as parking garages, have areas of benefit or service areas. When an urban renewal district is small, service areas may extend beyond the boundary of the district. The district cannot access resources generated by development that is in the service area but outside the district. When urban renewal districts are larger, it is more likely that service areas for improvements will fall within the district boundaries.
 - Typically bonds are used to finance improvements in urban renewal districts. The ability to issue bonds depends on whether investors believe that sufficient revenues will be generated to repay the bonds. In the case of bonds backed by tax increment revenue, the ability to repay bonds depends on future development generating increment. How much and what type of development activity will occur in a small geographic area is more unpredictable than for larger areas. Having a larger area in an urban renewal district increases the likelihood that development projections will be met and investors will be willing to buy bonds.
 - Certain types of development, like a lifestyle retail center, have the potential for generating significant tax increment and for creating spin-off development that also generates revenues. Such

developments also have very specific locational requirements and there are only very limited locations that work for them. Having a larger urban renewal district allows revenues from these unique developments to be reinvested over a wider area than is possible in a smaller district.

- A geographic area may have characteristics that are valued on a community-wide basis. It may make a unique contribution to the economic prosperity of downtown which would damage downtown's competitive position and synergy if lost. The Old Boise Historic District is an example. The contribution made by such areas would be enhanced by public improvements, but compromised if wholesale redevelopment were undertaken. Placing such areas in a larger district makes it possible to improve these areas without overdeveloping them.

Adding Old Boise–Eastside to the River Street–Myrtle Street district also raised the issue of geographic distribution of public investment and redevelopment activity. During the public review of this plan, property owners in the existing River Street–Myrtle Street district expressed concerns that adding Old Boise–Eastside would drain resources from the River Street–Myrtle Street district and leave some areas of River Street–Myrtle Street district without resources.

Long Term Financial Plan for River–Myrtle and Old Boise–Eastside

At the end of the master planning process for both the River–Myrtle planning area and the Old Boise–Eastside planning area, Keyser Marston Associates prepared a financial analysis for a combined River Myrtle–Old Boise Urban Renewal District and for Old Boise–Eastside as a stand-alone district. In both cases, the financial analysis projects that sufficient resources from tax increment revenue and other sources will be sufficient to pay for the proposed improvements. In the intervening time between the preliminary and final analysis for Old Boise–Eastside, the assumptions regarding the value of future development and the cost and extent of improvements were refined for this area and led to a positive result. (The financial analyses for the combined River Myrtle–Old Boise District and Old Boise–Eastside are available from CCDC.)

The CCDC Board of Commissioners recommended and the Boise City Council elected to proceed with a combined River Myrtle–Old Boise Urban Renewal District because of the advantages of larger districts discussed earlier.

At the same time, CCDC wanted to address the concerns expressed by property owners about the geographic distribution of resources. This plan includes CCDC's commitment to prepare a capital improvement plan for the River Myrtle–Old Boise district every five years for the remaining life of the district, and that the five-year plan be re-examined each year as part of CCDC's annual

budget process. The first five-year plan would cover 2006-2010. A stakeholder committee including property owners, business owners and residents in the district would assist in the preparation of the five-year plan and make recommendations to the CCDC Board of Commissioners on the type and timing of public investments in the various subdistricts of the River Myrtle–Old Boise district. These subdistricts are shown in Figure 11.

Relationship between River Street–Myrtle Street & Old Boise–Eastside Master Plans

The urban renewal plan for the combined River Myrtle–Old Boise Urban Renewal District has been structured so it includes two master plans: one for the original River Street–Myrtle Street district and one for the Old Boise–Eastside study area, with some modification of the boundary between them.¹ Figure 11 on page 63 shows how the two areas relate to one another. The Central Business District and Eastside neighborhood shown on the map are in the Old Boise–Eastside planning area and the remaining subdistricts are in the River–Myrtle planning area. This approach maintains continuity in the planning work for the River–Myrtle area. Preparing two master plans also recognizes that the property owners, business owners and residents in the Old Boise–Eastside area who participated in the development of the initial development concept and goals and policies for this area have a desire for a master plan focused on Old Boise–Eastside.

¹ An adjustment has been made to the boundary between the two master planning areas so that properties which were in the original River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Renewal District, but relate better to the Old Boise–Eastside area, are now covered by the Old Boise–Eastside Master Plan. These properties are located north of Front Street between Capitol Boulevard and 3rd Street.

2: Eligibility for Urban Renewal Activities



The Big Easy Concert house and several restaurants use this alley as their front door—just one of the unique places in the River–Myrtle planning area.

Preparation of an eligibility report represents the first step in determining whether an urban renewal district can be established. It documents whether an area meets the definition in the Idaho State Code for a deteriorated or deteriorating area, and thus is eligible for urban renewal activities. The local governing body makes this determination based on whether the area meets at least one of the criteria in the definition.

The original evaluation of the River Street–Myrtle Street area was done in three parts:

- Eligibility report of the Union Pacific Railroad Property (bounded by 15th, Front, 9th and Myrtle

streets) and adjacent areas dated September 23, 1991.

- Eligibility report for the Front–Myrtle area (bounded by Capitol, Grove/Front, Broadway, and Myrtle) and adjacent areas dated April 8, 1994.
- Supplemental Report on Eligibility of the Front–Myrtle and River Street areas dated September 19, 1994.

These reports prepared by Harlan W. Mann Consultant cover all of the properties within the boundary of the River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Renewal District as approved by the Boise City Council on December 6, 1994.

As part of amending the River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Renewal District to include the Old Boise–Eastside study area, CCDC and Boise City identified a limited number of other parcels to be added to the district. These included the following groups of parcels depicted in Figure 1:

- **Boise City Library, Log Cabin Literary Center and Anne Frank Memorial.** Boise City owns these parcels and including them would allow the application of CCDC resources to projects that benefit the community and implement the urban renewal plan. This addition also includes the Capitol Boulevard right-of-way from River Street (formerly Battery Street) to the Boise River, which would allow improvements made to this street to be continue from Front Street to the Capitol Boulevard bridge, rather than stopping part way.
- **Greenbelt parcel at the Ann Morrison Park Bridge.** This parcel is owned by the city and managed as a part of the Boise River Greenbelt system. It lies at the terminus of the Pioneer Corridor, so including it in the district would allow improvements along the Pioneer Corridor to extend to and connect with the greenbelt pathway.

- **700 N. Americana/1500 Shoreline and adjacent parcels.** Nearly 10 acres in size, the property at 700 N. Americana/1500 Shoreline represents a significant redevelopment opportunity. The adjacent parcels include several properties that are underdeveloped.

Other minor adjustments have been made in the boundary to incorporate both sides of certain streets so CCDC would have the ability to complete streetscaping improvements on both sides. An example is Broadway Avenue from the alley north of the Idaho Water Center to Myrtle Street. (The eligibility report for these additional parcels is available from CCDC.)

The CCDC Board of Commissioners accepted the eligibility report for the added parcels noted above on July 12, 2004. The Boise City Council received the report on July 13, 2004, and made a finding at its meeting on July 20, 2004 that the added parcels were eligible for inclusion in an urban renewal district based on the requirements of the Idaho State Code.

3: Planning & Policy Context



Increasing the supply of housing in the River–Myrtle planning area is one of the objectives of this plan. The River Plaza Apartments were built in 2000 through a public-private partnership and affordable housing tax credits.

This River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan carries forward the previous planning work done for this area in the Downtown Boise Plan (1993), the River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Design Plan (1994) and the Boise City Comprehensive Plan (1997), and in some cases recommends changes to these earlier plans. The general direction, however, remains the same. This section discusses these plans and how the concepts they present relate to the River–Myrtle planning area.

- **Downtown Boise Plan (1993)**
Boise City adopted this plan “to preserve and enhance the strengths of downtown businesses by

providing guidance for future growth and development in the downtown area.” The Downtown Boise Plan promotes downtown as a center of employment and services but also envisions downtown as a desirable place for residential neighborhoods. Figure 2 shows the subdistricts defined by this plan.

The Downtown Boise Plan undoubtedly influenced the River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Design Plan, adopted only one year later. Of particular relevance to the River–Myrtle planning area, is the Downtown Boise Plan land-use plan

(see Figure 2). It shows the extent of the central business district, which includes portions of the River–Myrtle planning area. The plan describes the goals and policies that pertain to the CBD, the treatment of the Connector and 8th Street and the general promotion of residential use surrounding the CBD. The Downtown Boise Plan did not anticipate the extent of development that has occurred in the Ada County Courthouse Corridor. More specifically, this plan discusses the following issues which pertain to the River–Myrtle planning area:

- **Extent of CBD:** The Downtown Boise Plan anticipates that the CBD will extend into the area south of Front Street, between 9th and 11th, with hotel, intense retail and office uses. It also implies dense, mixed-use development at the east end of the River Street neighborhood. The Downtown Boise Plan shows the CBD occupying a somewhat larger area in the River Street neighborhood than is expected in the River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan and in the 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Plan (see Figure 3). Regardless of the differences between the plans on the extent of the CBD, these plans are in agreement when describing the type of development expected in the CBD, i.e. high intensity, compact development with a diverse mix of uses, high level of pedestrian use and 24-hour activity.
- **Connector:** The Downtown Boise Plan discourages strip commercial development and encourages high-intensity uses along that part

of the Connector within the planned CBD between 4th and 13th streets. For areas along the Connector outside of the CBD, the plan encourages commercial and mixed-use development when it is proposed as part of a planned development with residential uses.

- **8th Street:** The Downtown Boise Plan envisions the street level of 8th Street to be the pedestrian focus of the central business district. It recommends that new development be designed to promote a festival marketplace atmosphere and pedestrian activity on this street. It implies that this people-oriented atmosphere, evident on 8th Street from Bannock to Front Street, be encouraged to continue south through the River–Myrtle planning area to River Street (formerly Battery Street).
- **River Street Residential Area and Front–Myrtle Office/Residential Corridor:** The Downtown Boise Plan identifies two areas in the River–Myrtle planning area as potential residential neighborhoods. The first is the River Street Residential Area, shown as a relatively confined area west of 11th Street, between Myrtle and River streets. It is described as a prime area for high-density residential development given its location near city parks, Boise State University and the central business district. Both the Downtown Boise Plan and the River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan recommend a greater range of housing types be developed to upgrade the perception of this neighborhood and to overcome its

current deteriorated state and historic stigma of being on the wrong side of the tracks. The River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan designates this area as the River Street Neighborhood, and envisions it extending into the areas identified by the Downtown Boise Plan as the Boise River Office Park and the Auto-Commercial Area (see discussion below). Increasing the size of the area identified as the River Street Neighborhood is seen as an important way to achieve a critical mass of housing and to create a feeling of community.

The second area identified for a potential residential neighborhood is the Front–Myrtle Office/Residential Corridor east of 4th and north of Julia Davis Park. The Downtown Boise Plan notes that the existing development pattern consists of many small, individually held lots that preclude easy consolidation for large development proposals. The plan recommends a mix of office and residential uses designed as coordinated developments and the avoidance of strip commercial uses. The River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan designates this area as East Connector/ Parkside and envisions a similar development pattern with medium- to high-density office and residential development. Residential development would be clustered on Broad Street and Myrtle Street.

- **Boise River Office Park:** The Downtown Plan identifies a relatively large area for development of an office park between River

Street and the Boise River, from 9th Street to 14th Street. It implies that uses similar to the Forest River office development would be extended. The River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan includes the western half of this area (from approximately 12th Street) as part of the River Street neighborhood, and envisions a more urban development pattern with a mix of uses, including a substantial number of housing units in this same area. This plan includes a recommendation that the Downtown Boise Plan be amended to adjust the extent of the office park area.

- **Auto-Commercial Area:** The area between 15th and Americana is shown for auto-oriented commercial uses in the Downtown Boise Plan. These uses are planned to extend toward the west, along Main and Fairview, to 30th Street. The River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan identifies this area as part of the River Street neighborhood to indicate that housing would be a more prominent element in the mix of uses and that the development pattern would be more urban than suburban in nature. Service businesses are expected to develop along 16th and Americana, along the western edge of the River–Myrtle planning area.
- **Boise City Comprehensive Plan (1997)**
Adopted in 1997 as the general plan for all of Boise and its area of impact, the Boise Comprehensive Plan designates all of the River–Myrtle planning area as mixed use. The land-use matrix indicates the mixed-use designation is open to a wide range of zoning districts and land uses.

New Urbanism Principles

New urbanism, when practiced in a downtown environment, envisions a lively mix of uses such that housing, employment, cultural, educational, recreational uses, health care and other services are in close proximity to each other, allowing people to satisfy daily needs by walking, bicycling and transit. Development is at urban densities, thus making such alternative modes of transportation more feasible. Dependence on individual vehicles for transportation is minimized. A mix of uses may occur in a single building or there may be single-use buildings with different uses within the same block or subdistrict of downtown. Retail uses are clustered into both small and large shopping districts. Housing is clustered into neighborhoods. Large concentrations of office buildings, which tend to go dark in the evenings and on weekends, are discouraged. Buildings are built close to or at the sidewalk line, using designs that create interest at the street level for passersby. Sidewalks are improved with street trees, furniture, planters and distinctive lighting and may include special paving. There is a system of public spaces with seating, plaza space, landscaping and art work where people can gather for relaxation, people-watching, socializing, dining and cultural events. Specific attention is given to creating a lively, welcoming public realm for people which structures and brings coherence to the urban fabric. The street system retains the traditional grid system common to downtowns at the turn of the century. Surface parking is minimized since it tends to sap urban vitality. Every effort is made to screen surface parking lots from street view. Where parking lots are on the street, they have an edge that replicates the building line along the sidewalk and are landscaped to soften their impact. Most parking is supplied by parking structures. Whenever possible, these structures are designed so the first floor is lined with shops, restaurants, housing units and other activating uses whenever this first floor faces a street, thus making the parking garage invisible to pedestrians.

The Boise City Comprehensive Plan acknowledges downtown Boise as the civic, economic and cultural center of the Boise City Planning Area, which includes land within Boise city limits and its area of impact. Downtown Boise is expected to continue to develop with a concentrated, higher density central business district (CBD) surrounded by integrated subdistricts, each maturing under new urbanism principles as applied by specific design overlays (see sidebar). The River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan includes development guidelines that endeavor to apply new urbanism principles in the downtown environment.

The Boise City Comprehensive Plan contains several policies that mirror or support the objectives and guidelines in the River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan. The following policies are especially noteworthy for what they suggest about downtown housing, public spaces and the character of new development, the Cultural District and pedestrian connectivity:

- The residential component of the downtown shall be given particular emphasis to encourage living opportunities within walking distance of the downtown employment centers as well as neighborhood services. (policy 8.17.4)
- Additional civic open space facilities shall be incorporated into the downtown environment. (policy 8.17.7)
- Strip commercial, auto-intensive uses shall not be allowed in the downtown core except west of the CBD in an area bounded by 23rd Street, 27th Street, Main Street and Americana Boulevard. (policy 8.17.8)

- In order to complement the emerging cultural facilities and activities around South 8th Street and the west end of Julia Davis Park, a strategy plan shall be prepared to provide a distinct identity for the area as a cultural district. (policy 8.17.9)
- Downtown shall continue to develop with a framework of streets, paths and open spaces that build upon existing downtown networks and strengthen connections to the Boise River and between subdistricts. (policy 8.17.10)

■ 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Plan

Boise City now has three urban renewal districts that encompass the heart of downtown as one coherent piece of geography: Central District, River Myrtle–Old Boise and Westside Downtown. During the preparation of the River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan, it became obvious that the vision and many of the design and development guidelines for downtown redevelopment are common to all of the urban renewal districts. In addition, it is helpful to look at certain elements such as land uses, streetscaping, civic spaces, bicycle and pedestrian routes, and transportation and parking on a downtown-wide basis to see the overall picture. From a functional standpoint, the boundaries for the urban renewal districts are actually artificial lines that are needed to determine where tax increment revenue is generated and spent. One of the goals of downtown redevelopment is to arrive at a point where these districts function as interconnected places, land uses and activity centers in one district complement and support the other

districts and downtown functions as an organic whole.

The 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Plan was created to illustrate the seamless nature of downtown and to describe both the overall vision and goals for its revitalization and design and development guidelines shared by all of the districts. It depicts common elements on maps that show all of the districts and the periphery around them, so that these elements are put into context. Plans, objectives, design and development guidelines and action steps that apply to a particular district are included in the master plan for that district. The 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Plan serves as a preface to these master plans.

The 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Plan has a time frame of 20 years because all of the existing districts are scheduled to sunset on or before 2025. Boise City and CCDC have established a vision (see sidebar) and overall goals for downtown revitalization as part of this plan. Downtown revitalization goals include:

- **Heart of region:** Assure that downtown Boise remains the foremost urban center in the region for business, government, medical care, culture, education and urban living.
- **People place:** Develop downtown as a place for people, offering a delightful and enriching environment for living, working and playing. Assure that the mix of land uses and the design of

the urban fabric support urban vitality. Emphasize the needs of people over vehicles.

- **Economic development:** Promote a prosperous economy in downtown and the region by creating a place that is attractive to cutting-edge companies and the workforce they employ.
- **Urban form:** Create a compact, urban form with a lively mix of uses. Emphasize quality, sustainability and a feeling of permanence in the how downtown is built. Develop subdistricts, in-town neighborhoods and activity centers so each has its own character and sense of identity.
- **Public realm:** Develop a system of parks, plazas and public spaces that become focal points in the downtown, act as catalysts for private development, provide refreshment and relief from urban surroundings and add to the livability of downtown. Improve streets and sidewalks so they create a welcoming pedestrian environment.
- **Transportation system:** Create an effective multimodal transportation system in downtown Boise that promotes walking, bicycling, carpooling and transit, and reduces dependence on automobiles. Ease traffic flow in downtown by improvements to street design and signalization and by traffic demand management. Develop a multimodal transportation system for the region that addresses potential traffic impacts caused by future growth in downtown, and makes travel to, from and within downtown by alternative modes practical and attractive.

Vision of Downtown Boise - 2025

The 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Plan envisions downtown remaining the foremost urban center in the region for business, government, culture, education and urban living. It is and will continue to be a collection of districts, each with its own unique character and function. Districts, activity centers and in-town neighborhoods will be connected by a well-designed and functional multimodal transportation system. This transportation system will provide connections within downtown and to the surrounding region.

Downtown will become a mosaic of delightful places that evoke a sense of community and invite people to explore and enjoy. It will have a rich collection of both historic and contemporary buildings—valuing its ties to the past as well as the possibilities of the future with architecture that conveys a sense of quality and permanence. These buildings will provide the setting for a lively mix of uses, including housing, offices, retail, hotels and convention facilities, and cultural, entertainment and learning opportunities. Downtown will become a model for sustainable land use patterns, building practices and transportation and how to make wise use of resources. Downtown will offer an invigorating environment with bustling streets, music, festivals, public art, parks and plazas, neighborhood taverns and great restaurants. There will be a rich intellectual environment that attracts talented people and sparks creativity and innovation, supported by state-of-the-art telecommunications and technology. People from all walks of life will feel welcome and become engaged in the life of downtown. The history and culture of its peoples will be celebrated. There will be room for quirkiness and spontaneity. Downtown Boise will be a vibrant place where people thrive and businesses prosper—a place that contributes to the social, spiritual, environmental and economic well-being of residents, workers, visitors and the region.

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- **Parking:** Provide an adequate supply of parking while minimizing the use of land for surface parking lots. Achieve maximum utilization of parking by developing land uses that have offsetting parking demands, making private parking available to the public when not needed otherwise and making public parking facilities easily accessible from the various subdistricts and activity centers in downtown.

Like previous plans for downtown Boise, the River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan follows the guiding principles of mixed land uses, compact, urban-style development and pedestrian-oriented urban design. It is essentially consistent with the more recent of these plans and moves these plans forward by focusing in particular on how to:

- Improve the Broadway–Chinden Connector so it becomes an attractive boulevard compatible with a people-oriented downtown and suitable for development of a wide range of uses along its edges, and it does not impede north-south connections between the River–Myrtle planning area and the remainder of downtown.
- Create flourishing urban neighborhoods in the River Street area and in the Warehouse/Cultural District.
- Achieve a balance between office and housing uses such that housing does not disappear but increases.
- Construct an enhanced, boulevard-style Pioneer Walk through the River Street neighborhood, and use the walkway as both an anchor and a catalyst for development and as a link between the neighborhood and downtown.

- Create a destination-oriented shopping district between 9th, Front, Capitol and Myrtle with the possibility of expansion west to 10th Street.
- Cluster hotel, retail, convention and tourism-oriented uses along Front and Myrtle streets east of 13th Street.
- Add development to the Courthouse Corridor so a more complete mix of uses is created and the institutional effect of the existing buildings is softened.
- Create a major mixed-use development on the southwest corner of Front and Broadway.
- Increase densities in the River–Myrtle planning area to achieve the development forecast, increase urban vitality and make alternative modes of transportation more practical.
- Promote the use of walking, bicycling and transit.
- Maintain the vitality and character of River–Myrtle planning area for the long term.

This plan proposes specific objectives, design and development guidelines and action steps for this unique area of downtown Boise.

4: Market Context



Buildings in the Warehouse/Cultural District have been renovated and reused but still retain their historic flavor.

Preparation of the River Street–Myrtle Street plan update included a review of the prospects for office, retail and housing development in downtown Boise to 2025 to determine if the amount and form of development envisioned by this plan is realistic. The review relied upon a market forecast prepared by Strategic Economics for the Downtown Boise Mobility Study and reported in a document entitled Market Analysis and Growth Projections. The Downtown Boise Mobility Study is a joint effort by Boise City, CCDC, Valley Ride, Boise State University, Ada County Highway District, Idaho Transportation Department and the Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho to assess and plan for long-term transportation needs in downtown Boise. As a part of this effort, Strategic Economics was

asked to estimate the type, amount and approximate location of future development in downtown Boise to the year 2025. This work was done in three steps:

- Assessing the regional market for housing, office and retail and estimating the share expected to be captured by downtown for each type of development.
- Identifying opportunity sites in downtown that were likely to develop or redevelop and to what level of density.
- Allocating the growth identified in the first step to the opportunity sites and then testing the pattern of development against local knowledge.

Using this process, Strategic Economics estimated the amount of development expected to occur in each of 28 traffic analysis zones. The zones in the River–Myrtle planning area were aggregated into the totals presented below. Strategic Economics forecasts the following demand in the River–Myrtle planning area for new development between 2005 and 2025, which is then compared with the total development expected in the downtown mobility study area:

	Percent of Downtown Market to 2025
■ 2,470 housing units	58% of total
■ 1,577,286 square feet of office	41% of total
■ 367,405 square feet of retail	75% of total
□ 250,000 destination serving	
□ 117,405 local serving	

The forecast reflects the fact that River–Myrtle planning area has a substantial amount of land that is either vacant, in parking lots or underutilized. It anticipates the River–Myrtle planning area will become a focal point for large-scale retail development in downtown Boise. The projected amount of retail is in addition to the BoDo

development at 8th and Broad, which is currently under construction and includes 81,700 square feet of retail, 55,520 square feet of office, a 168-room hotel and an 11-screen movie theater. The BoDo development is seen as an anchor that will attract additional lifestyle- and destination-type retailing in close proximity. The most likely location for this additional development is between Front and Myrtle to the west of 9th Street. The forecast allocates 100% of all new regional-serving retail in the downtown mobility area to the River–Myrtle planning area.

The River–Myrtle planning area is also seen as a prime location for additional office and housing development. Office development is expected to occur along the Connector and along River Street between 9th and 11th streets. Housing development is expected in the River Street neighborhood, with higher density housing clustered along the Pioneer Walk and 11th Street, and possibly in a major mixed-use development on the west side of Broadway between Front and Myrtle. The market forecast does not envision much housing being added to the Parkside neighborhood by 2025 because other locations are more likely to take precedence.

5: Preferred Development Concept



Creating public spaces that enhance private development is one way to establish a sense of place for people. The pedestrian promenade through the Courthouse Corridor connects the Idaho Water Center, Civic Plaza Apartments, and the Ada County Courthouse (not pictured) and provides an attractive setting for these office and housing developments.

The preferred development concept for the River–Myrtle planning area depicts the desired pattern of development for this area over the remaining 20-year life of the plan. It builds on the earlier work done in the River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Design Plan, which described the overall goals and objectives and development concept as noted in Appendix A.

This update describes a more refined and detailed development concept for the River–Myrtle planning area. It provides more specific information on land uses and densities and how the subdistricts are to be differentiated from one another. It has a clearer set of development

guidelines. It also includes revised streetscape standards that call for certain streets to be improved using brick sidewalks and others to be improved using modularly scored concrete to create more continuity of treatment and contain costs. The development concept emerged from the work done to identify overall objectives for the River–Myrtle planning area and to create specific plans for each of the five identified subdistricts in the area (see Chapters 6 and 7).

The preferred development concept is prefaced by a general description of the existing character in the River–Myrtle planning area.

Existing Character of River–Myrtle Planning Area

The River–Myrtle planning area is the largest planning area in an urban renewal district in downtown Boise. As such, it has a varied character reflecting its history, land ownership patterns and market dynamics. This section identifies the key elements that shape the nature of this part of downtown Boise. The subdistrict plans which appear in Chapter 7 provide more detailed information on current conditions, as well as objectives, design and development guidelines and action steps for specific areas of the River–Myrtle planning area.

Key Elements

The River–Myrtle planning area is shaped by certain organizing elements that form its structure and character. These include:

- Broadway–Chinden Connector running east and west through the planning area
- Capitol Boulevard, which is the central north-south axis through the planning area
- 8th Street, which runs north-south parallel to Capitol Boulevard but is a much quieter, people oriented street
- Warehouse/Cultural District situated in the center of the planning area
- Boise River, Boise River Greenbelt and riverfront parks along the southern edge
- River Street and Parkside neighborhoods on the west and east of the Warehouse/Cultural District
- Pioneer Walkway through the River Street neighborhood
- Courthouse Corridor

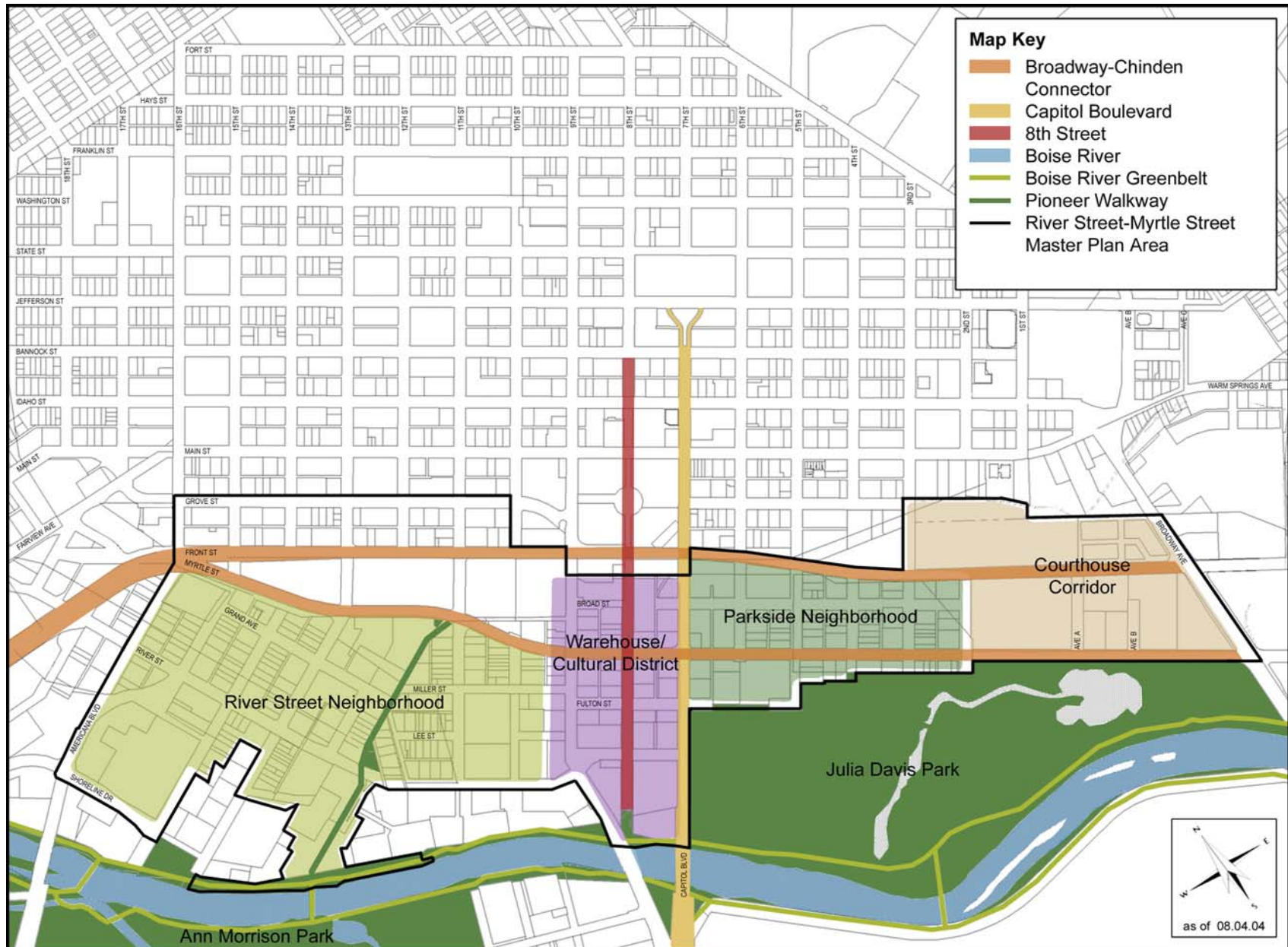
These elements are described below to provide a flavor of River–Myrtle planning area as a distinctive place within downtown Boise with its own challenges, assets and opportunities.

■ **Broadway–Chinden Connector**

The River–Myrtle planning area stretches from Broadway Avenue to Americana Boulevard and from Grove Street to the Boise River. One of its most prominent features is the Broadway–Chinden Connector that runs east and west through the planning area. It reflects the historical location of the rail yards in downtown Boise. Front Street and Myrtle Street, which form the Connector, are each five lanes with a wide-open feeling that tends to encourage higher speed driving than occurs on the traditional grid of downtown streets. Certain sections of Front Street have signals at each cross street and development along the street edge, while sections of Myrtle have no signals for several blocks and very low-scale or nonexistent development. The street sections without signals are very automobile oriented and intimidating to pedestrians. West of 9th Street there is a series of superblocks between Front and Myrtle. East of 9th Street to 2nd Street, Broad Street runs between the two sides of the connector, but it ceases to exist from 2nd Street to Broadway. Winco Foods occupies four city blocks from 2nd Street to Avenue A. The University of Idaho Foundation owns property close to four city blocks in size from Avenue B to Broadway.

In total, there are the equivalent of 64 block faces bordered by the Connector. The size and design of Front and Myrtle streets exert a powerful impact on adjacent properties and a strong influence on the

Figure 4: Key Elements



type of development being built in this environment. Development along this roadway tends to be more monumental than is typical of downtown and favors office and institutional uses. It is difficult to locate residential or retail development on these streets. The Connector also tends to create a barrier between the River–Myrtle planning area and the remainder of downtown. The impact of the Connector should not be underestimated, and specific development guidelines rigorously applied along these streets are needed to achieve an outcome that is compatible with the desired character for the River–Myrtle planning area and for downtown Boise as a whole.

- **Capitol Boulevard**

Capitol Boulevard is the most significant street in downtown given it begins at the Boise Depot and ends at the Idaho State Capitol Building, and is the major gateway to downtown. It has the potential to become a grand ceremonial-style street. However, the intensity and quality of development along its edges vary. Parking lots and low-scale buildings dominate the section between Fulton and Front streets, and the pedestrian environment is unappealing. The section between Front and Bannock streets has an urban character with a series of high-rise buildings on its western edge. This powerful edge remains unanswered on the east side of the street, which is for the most part lined with smaller-scale historic buildings. An urban design plan for beautifying this street was prepared in 1989 and is being revised at this time. More could be done to celebrate this street.

- **8th Street**

In contrast to the Connector and Capitol Boulevard, 8th Street is considered to be one of the premier pedestrian-oriented streets in downtown. It runs north and south near the center of the River–Myrtle planning area connecting The Grove Plaza, the Boise City Library, Anne Frank Human Rights Memorial and Boise River Greenbelt. This stretch of 8th Street does not yet have the same lively atmosphere or pedestrian amenities that are in place between Bannock and Main streets, although the plans for the BoDo retail development suggest a change in this direction is coming. The street does have a pleasant feel for both walking and bicycling with its historic flavor, trees lining its sidewalks and low volumes of traffic.

- **Warehouse/Cultural District**

The Warehouse District, left from the railroad era, is bordered by 9th and Front streets, Capitol Boulevard and the Boise River. Many historic brick buildings remain standing and are occupied by light manufacturing, service businesses, professional offices, retail shops and restaurants. The buildings lining one block of 8th Street between Myrtle and Broad streets and two blocks of Broad Street between Capitol and 9th were renovated into the 8th Street Marketplace in the 1970s, intended as a destination-shopping district that had only limited success. These blocks have been incorporated into the new BoDo retail development that is focused on the four blocks bordered by Myrtle, 9th and Front streets and Capitol Boulevard.

This area has also been identified as Boise’s Cultural District. The Esther Simplot Performing Arts Academy is located here along with the Boise City Library, Log Cabin Literary Center, Anne Frank Human Rights Memorial, Foothills School of Arts and Sciences, Idaho Urban Research and Design Center and Boise State University studio arts program. The Fulton Street Theater opened in 2000 in a renovated warehouse. The alley running parallel to 8th Street between Broad and Myrtle streets hosts a lively entertainment scene with the opening of the Big Easy Concert House and several bars and restaurants. (The full range of cultural venues in the Cultural District and nearby are described in Chapter 7 in the subdistrict plan for the Warehouse/Cultural District.)

The Warehouse/Cultural District has been identified as a prime location for creating an in-town residential neighborhood given its proximity to cultural amenities, Julia Davis Park, the Boise River and its greenbelt, BSU and shopping and dining opportunities in the central business district and the Old Boise Historic District.

■ **Boise River, Boise River Greenbelt and Riverfront Parks**

The River–Myrtle planning area has a treasure trove of recreational amenities at its doorstep. The Boise River and the greenbelt along its banks run along the south edge of the River–Myrtle planning area. The greenbelt contains a pathway used by walkers, runners and bicyclists, which extends for 26 miles.

Two beautiful, large-scale parks—Julia Davis Park on the east end and Ann Morrison Park on the west end—offer cultural facilities, playgrounds, tennis courts, playing fields and open green space immediately adjacent to the planning area.

■ **River Street and Parkside¹ Neighborhoods**

The remnants of the historic River Street neighborhood are located on the west end of the River–Myrtle planning area. There is a sizeable stock of single family houses built in the late 1800s and early 1900s, which are in fair to poor condition. Most of them being used for rental housing or have been converted to offices. These are mixed in with newer garden-style fourplexes and higher density apartment buildings. The River Street neighborhood also includes Community House, Boise City’s homeless shelter and soup kitchen, and the Head Start Center. Low- to medium-rise office buildings have clustered along the north edge of this neighborhood on Myrtle Street.

The Parkside (former Myrtle Street) neighborhood is squeezed between the two sides of the Connector and 6th and 2nd streets. It is smaller than the River Street neighborhood, only two blocks deep, and has become more fragmented due to houses being cleared and the construction of warehouses and low-rise and medium-size office buildings. There are no apartment buildings in this area as there are in the River Street neighborhood. Most of the houses are in fair to poor condition.

¹ The 1994 River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Design Plan identified Myrtle Street north of Julia Davis Park as one of the subdistricts in River–Myrtle. This area was also referred to as the Myrtle Street neighborhood. This area has been reconfigured somewhat and renamed the East Connector/Parkside Neighborhood for purposes of this plan update. The existing residential neighborhood occupies a portion of this subdistrict.

Both of these neighborhoods have vacant land and surface parking lots, and the River Street neighborhood has a significant supply of underutilized land. These properties represent opportunity sites for the revitalization of these neighborhoods. Because the River Street neighborhood is so much larger and has less impact from the Connector, it offers more opportunity to re-establish a flourishing residential neighborhood. The survival of the Parkside neighborhood is less certain.

■ **Pioneer Walkway**

At present, the Pioneer Walkway is an asphalt path that runs diagonally from the Boise River at approximately 12th Street to the intersection of 11th and Myrtle streets. It runs through the River Street neighborhood. A design competition held in 2001 resulted in a concept for transforming this pathway into a grand, boulevard-style link for pedestrians and bicyclists from this neighborhood to the central business district that would also serve as a gathering place for people, an anchor for the neighborhood and a catalyst for development.

■ **Courthouse Corridor**

In the last four years, an amazing transformation has occurred on land owned by Ada County north of Front Street between 4th Street and Broadway Avenue, and on an adjacent parcel. During this short span of time, the following projects have been completed or are close to completion:

- Ada County Courthouse – 322,825 square feet of office and courtroom space

- Civic Plaza Apartments – 299 units of affordable housing
- Civic Plaza Parking Garages (A&B) – 805 parking spaces
- Idaho Water Center – 207,300 square feet of office and laboratory space
- Pedestrian promenade from the Ada County Courthouse to the Idaho Water Center
- Kriezenbeck Building – 64,500 square feet of office

These projects have created a place now known as the Courthouse Corridor that is characterized by an urban level of intensity and monumental buildings. It expands the area considered to be downtown to include what used to be bare ground, and it marks the intersection of Front and Broadway as an entrance into downtown. It has dramatically changed the picture of what the east end of the River–Myrtle planning area will become.

Taken together, these descriptions show that the River–Myrtle planning area does not have one uniform character but is composed of a series of places or subdistricts each of which has its own character. Some of these places have a character that will most likely persist into the future either because construction is recent like the Courthouse Corridor or there are historic buildings that will be retained, as is the case in the Warehouse/Cultural District. The future of the River Street and Parkside neighborhoods and the West Connector is less certain and will depend on the interplay of land values, market opportunities, public investment and the implementation of the objectives and guidelines contained in this plan.

Desired Character for River–Myrtle Planning Area – 2025

The preferred development concept forms the basis for the plan's policy emphasis and is used to predict the tax increment revenue that will be available to pay for the capital improvements needed to implement the plan. It is intended to take the long view—to depict what the River–Myrtle planning area will be like in the year 2025. This description serves as a summary of Chapters 6 and 7, which explain in more detail the basis for this concept presented here.

The ideal result of implementing the River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan would be:

- The River Street neighborhood becomes a flourishing urban neighborhood with a lively mix of uses, a full range of housing choices and a neighborhood-shopping district.
- The Pioneer Walkway is a delightful and inviting boulevard-style pedestrian link between the Boise River to downtown through the River Street neighborhood used by the community and visitors for walking, bicycling, shopping, dining and recreation.
- The Pioneer Walkway is lined with urban intensity residential, office and retail development, restaurants with outdoor dining, artwork and other cultural amenities.
- The Broadway–Chinden Connector west of Capitol Boulevard becomes a focal point for hotels, destination-type retail and entertainment, convention and tourism-oriented uses.
- A destination-shopping district is developed between 9th, Front, Capitol and Myrtle with the possibility of expansion west to 10th Street.
- Historic buildings in the Warehouse/Cultural District are restored and fully occupied where appropriate. Weaker buildings are replaced by infill development that, where applicable, complements the existing historic fabric.
- Eighth Street is recognized as the primary pedestrian connection between the central business district and the Boise River, and is improved in the River–Myrtle planning area in a manner similar to how this street is improved between Bannock and Main.
- A compact, urban-style residential neighborhood develops in the Warehouse/Cultural District between 9th Street, Myrtle Street, Capitol Boulevard and the Boise River.
- The Parkside neighborhood has an eclectic mix of land uses with office uses clustered along Front Street and residential uses clustered along Broad Street and on Myrtle Street where views of Julia Davis Park would create an attractive environment for housing. Design changes will be made to Myrtle Street to soften its impact on adjacent properties and make housing more feasible.
- Additional development occurs in the Courthouse Corridor along Front Street that is compatible with the existing apartments, expands the range of uses, and softens the current institutional effect of the existing buildings.
- The property on the southeast corner of Front and Broadway is developed into a major mixed-use development.
- Improvements are made to the Broadway–Chinden Connector so that it becomes an attractive boulevard compatible with a people-oriented downtown and suitable for development of a wide range of uses along its edges, and does not impede north-south connections between the River–Myrtle planning area and the remainder of downtown.

- Thirteenth, 11th, 8th, 5th and 3rd streets and avenues A and B become pedestrian and bicycling routes across the Connector.
- Fourth Street and either 10th or 12th streets or both are re-established as through streets between Grove and Myrtle streets.
- Blocks currently dominated by surface parking are redeveloped with a mix of building uses designed to maximize the capacity of each block, giving consideration to the scale and character of adjacent buildings.
- Densities in the River–Myrtle planning area increase to achieve the development forecast, create urban vitality and make alternative modes of transportation more practical.
- Public and private parking garages are built to replace surface parking, with public garages situated so as to provide reasonable coverage for the River–Myrtle planning area.
- Safe and convenient routes for walking and bicycling are created, and these modes become the predominant means by which people meet their daily transportation needs in downtown Boise.
- The River–Myrtle planning area is better served by transit.

Achieving the Concept

Achieving this development concept will most likely require re-evaluating zoning regulations and market

intervention and incentives, especially to achieve the level of housing envisioned. People interested in living downtown view the Cultural District as being a desirable location for housing. It already has a certain ambience and is close to existing downtown amenities. The River Street and Parkside neighborhoods in their current condition have less appeal.¹ Public investments that create a sense of community will be needed to develop confidence in future prospects for the area and attract housing developers, buyers and renters.

The vision anticipates a major transformation of the River–Myrtle planning area to a much more urban place with a vibrant cultural and shopping district at its center, a concentration of destination and tourism-related businesses along the Connector west of Capitol Boulevard, flourishing in-town neighborhoods in the River Street neighborhood and the Cultural District and higher density office and housing development along the Connector east of Capitol Boulevard. Development will be leveraged by investments in public facilities, such as construction of streetscapes, public parking facilities and an enhanced Pioneer Walkway, and public-private partnerships to develop housing.

Currently, only a fraction of the River–Myrtle planning area's economic potential has been realized. The expectation is that every parcel would contribute fully to the social and economic vitality of this planning area and to downtown Boise as a whole.

¹ In spring 2004, CCDC conducted a consumer survey of people living in Boise and in Ada County to measure the level of interest in downtown living. Two of the questions focused on what areas of downtown were considered most desirable as a place to live. When respondents were asked whether they were interested in living in each of six different areas of downtown, they chose the Cultural District more frequently than River Street, Parkside and Westside districts but less frequently than the Heart of Downtown or Old Boise. When asked to pick their top choice among the six areas, approximately 12% of the respondents chose the Cultural District, 12% chose the River Street District, and 9.7% chose the Parkside District as their first choice.

6: Overall Plans, Guidelines & Action Steps



Creating attractive and refreshing places where people experience a feeling of community adds to the livability and enjoyment of the downtown environment. The Anne Frank Human Rights Memorial—located in Boise's Cultural District—is one such place.

The most important function of the River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan is to identify the significant issues affecting this area, describe what the current situation and desired future outcomes are relative to these issues and then communicate how the plan proposes to arrive at these outcomes. Plans have been prepared at two levels for the River–Myrtle planning area because covers such a large geographic area. First, there are a series of overall plans that focus on the following issues:

- Preferred Development Concept
- Preservation, Revitalization & Renewal
- Building & Site Design
- Street Character, Civic Spaces & Pedestrian Ways
- Transportation & Parking

The overall plans provide an overview of the master plan recommendations. They help make understanding the overall intent of the River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan easier and focus on recommendations common to all of the geographic areas in the River–Myrtle planning area. They also provide the basis for the capital investments proposed to implement the plan. The plan for each issue includes a discussion of existing conditions and desired outcomes. It presents design and development guidelines and action steps as way to communicate what needs to be done to implement the plan recommendations for that issue.

Second, the River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan includes a series of subdistrict plans. The River–Myrtle planning area covers approximately 230 acres and naturally divides into a series of geographic areas that vary in character from one another. A map of these areas or subdistricts is on page 63. The River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan includes a specific plan for each of these subdistricts, which describes the existing conditions, desired future character, design and development guidelines and action steps for the subdistrict. The guidelines and action steps chart a course for achieving the desired character for each subdistrict. The subdistrict plans are in Chapter 7.

If a guideline or action step affects more than one subdistrict, it is typically found in the overall plans. If a guideline or action step is specific to one subdistrict, it typically appears in the subdistrict plan.

The 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Plan serves as a preface to this River–Myrtle Master Plan. It contains design and development guidelines for urban design, building and site layout and civic spaces that apply to all of the downtown urban renewal districts. Understanding the full intent of what is intended for the River–Myrtle planning area requires referring to the 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Plan and both the overall and subdistrict plans in this River–Myrtle Master Plan.

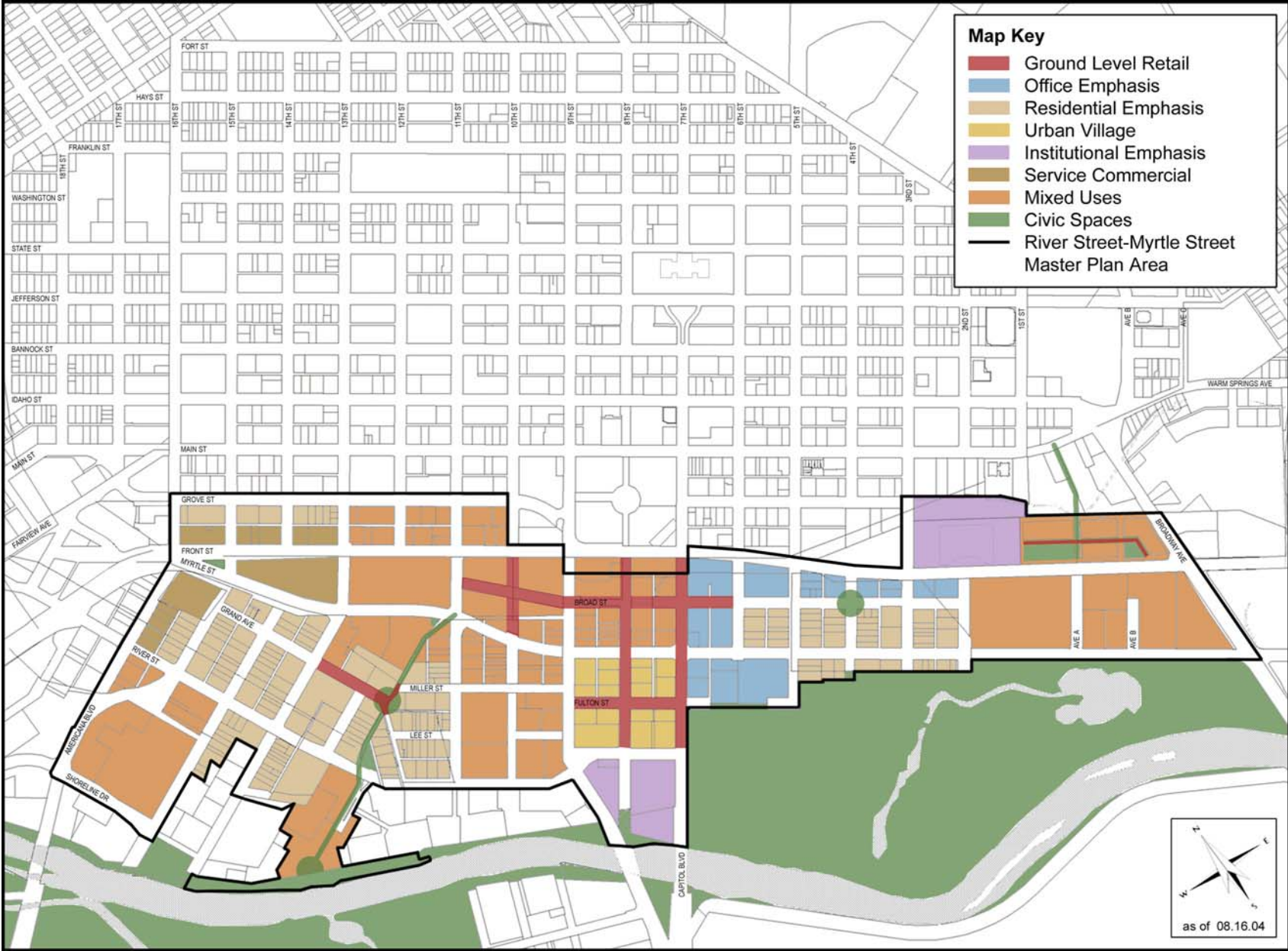
1.0 Preferred Development Concept

The preferred development concept takes a long-term view of future land-use patterns in the River–Myrtle planning area. It describes the pattern of land uses desired by the year 2025 using emphasis areas as well as other land-use categories. Emphasis areas have a predominant use but they are not limited to that use only. In fact, a mix of uses in each of the emphasis areas is encouraged to promote urban vitality and allow people to live, work, shop and play either within their own neighborhood or in other areas of downtown. Having a mix of uses in close proximity to one another also encourages travel by walking, bicycling and transit.

The types of uses anticipated by the preferred development concept are described below and shown in Figure 5.

- **Mixed Uses:** Higher intensity areas that typically have a mix of office, residential, retail, restaurants and entertainment uses, and may also have lodging and convention or conference facilities. These areas typically have a high concentration of pedestrian activity.
- **Residential Emphasis:** Areas with a mix of housing in terms of type and cost, where housing projects are clustered into neighborhoods, that may also have retail, restaurants, office, service businesses and other support uses that meet people's daily needs.

Figure 5: Preferred Development Concept



- **Urban Village:** Areas with a concentration of higher density residential uses that also have smaller-scale office uses and neighborhood-oriented retail and restaurants.
- **Office Emphasis:** Areas where office uses are concentrated that also may have retail, restaurants, lodging and convention or conference facilities, and higher density residential uses.
- **Institutional Emphasis:** Areas where government offices are concentrated such as the Ada County Courthouse Corridor that also may have offices, retail, restaurants, lodging and residential uses.
- **Ground Level Retail:** Street frontages where ground level retail and other active, people-oriented uses are encouraged. The River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan recommends clustering retail uses into shopping districts rather than allowing retail uses to become dispersed. Retail uses are encouraged to occupy the first floor of buildings where upper floors are occupied by other uses.
- **Service Commercial:** Areas where businesses such as records storage, auto parts and repair, car washes and auto detailing, plumbing, and electrical and HVAC installation and repair are located. These businesses offer services to people living and working in downtown, and often need outdoor storage, truck parking and shop space.
- **Civic Spaces:** Park and plaza spaces designed and intended for public use.

The preferred development concept recognizes the major features in the planning area and how they influence the types of land uses that will be successful. It shows a concentration of mixed use, office, institutional and service commercial uses along the Connector, Capitol Boulevard, Broadway and Americana. These streets are classified as principal arterials and carry high volumes of traffic relative to other downtown streets. Given their functional classification and design, traffic volumes on these streets are expected to increase as downtown intensifies over the next 20 years. (Estimates of traffic demand in 2025 on streets in the River–Myrtle planning area are discussed in Section 5: Transportation and Parking of this chapter. These estimates were derived from the traffic modeling done as part of the Downtown Boise Mobility Study in 2004.)

It is difficult to locate residential uses facing directly onto such streets. Residential uses tend to be more successful when clustered into neighborhoods served by lower volume, local streets. In the River–Myrtle planning area, two areas have been identified as residential emphasis areas and one as an urban village.

- River Street neighborhood located between the Connector and the Boise River and between Americana Boulevard and 11th Street.
- Parkside neighborhood located between Front, 6th and 2nd streets and the northern boundary of Julia Davis Park.
- Fulton Street Village between Capitol Boulevard and Myrtle, River (formerly Battery) and 9th streets in the Warehouse/Cultural District.

The plan has an objective to increase the amount and range of housing options available in the planning area, consistent with CCDC's downtown housing initiative. Achieving this objective is one of the greatest challenges in implementing this plan. By identifying housing emphasis areas, the plan makes clear that housing development is desired and that housing projects should be focused in certain areas rather than scattered.

Mixed-use areas are shown along the Connector from 11th Street to Capitol Boulevard and from 2nd Street to Broadway Avenue. Mixed uses are also shown between 11th, Myrtle, 9th and River streets between the River Street neighborhood and the Warehouse/Cultural District. This area is considered a transitional area. It is uncertain how this area will develop; several possibilities are plausible. Office development may occur due to this area's proximity to Forest River, 9th Street and the Connector or more housing may occur if the residential portion of the River Street Neighborhood expands. The plan also identifies three sites as having potential for major mixed-use projects: at Americana and Shoreline, on Broadway between Front and Myrtle and along the Pioneer Corridor south of River Street. The first two locations have large sites and excellent visibility from major streets. The location on the Pioneer Corridor has exceptional natural features on which to build.

Office uses are concentrated along Front Street, Capitol Boulevard and Myrtle Street but are also expected to be present in the mixed-use areas.

Institutional uses are concentrated in two areas: at the southern end of 8th Street where the Boise City Library, Log Cabin Literary Center and Anne Frank Human

Rights Memorial are located, and in the Courthouse Corridor.

Ground level retail is concentrated on a limited number of streets. This pattern is consistent with one of the objectives of this plan, which is to cluster retail into shopping districts rather than dissipating retail energy by allowing it to locate on any street frontage. This approach is contrary to the current requirement in the C-5 zoning district that 70% of the ground floor on each street frontage be designed to accommodate retail and other people-oriented, active uses. The River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan recommends that this requirement be revised so it would only apply on streets designated for street level retail in the Preferred Development Concept.

Service commercial uses are clustered at the periphery of the River–Myrtle planning area along the Connector west of 13th and along Americana. Civic spaces indicate where existing and proposed public parks and plazas are located.

Design & Development Guidelines

Design and development guidelines regarding preferred land uses are best stated as part of the subdistrict plans. These plans are in Chapter 7.

Action Steps

Actions for implementing the preferred development concept presented here focus on the degree to which existing zoning designations support the objectives of the River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan. Proposals to

revise a zoning designation that would apply to any subdistrict where this zoning designation occurs are noted here. The reasons for these recommendations are discussed Chapter 8. The subdistrict plans contained in Chapter 7 contain action steps regarding revisions to zoning designations that would apply to specific parcels in a particular subdistrict.

- Work with Boise City to revise the provision in the C-5 zoning district that requires 70% of each street frontage to be designed to accommodate retail or other people-oriented, active uses so it applies to streets designated for ground level retail uses on the Preferred Development Concept (Figure 5). Amend the list of acceptable uses to include residential at the ground level.
- Evaluate whether the existing R-O zoning regulations need to be revised to better support plan goals promoting urban intensities, housing and mixed use in the River–Myrtle planning area, and work with Boise City to revise these regulations if needed.
- Evaluate if a new zoning category is needed which would give more weight to residential uses to replace the R-O zoning designation in the River Street and Parkside neighborhoods, and work with Boise City to develop a new zoning category if needed.
- Evaluate whether minimum residential densities are needed in zoning districts applicable to the River–Myrtle planning area to achieve housing goals and propose zoning revisions if warranted.

2.0 Preservation, Revitalization and Renewal

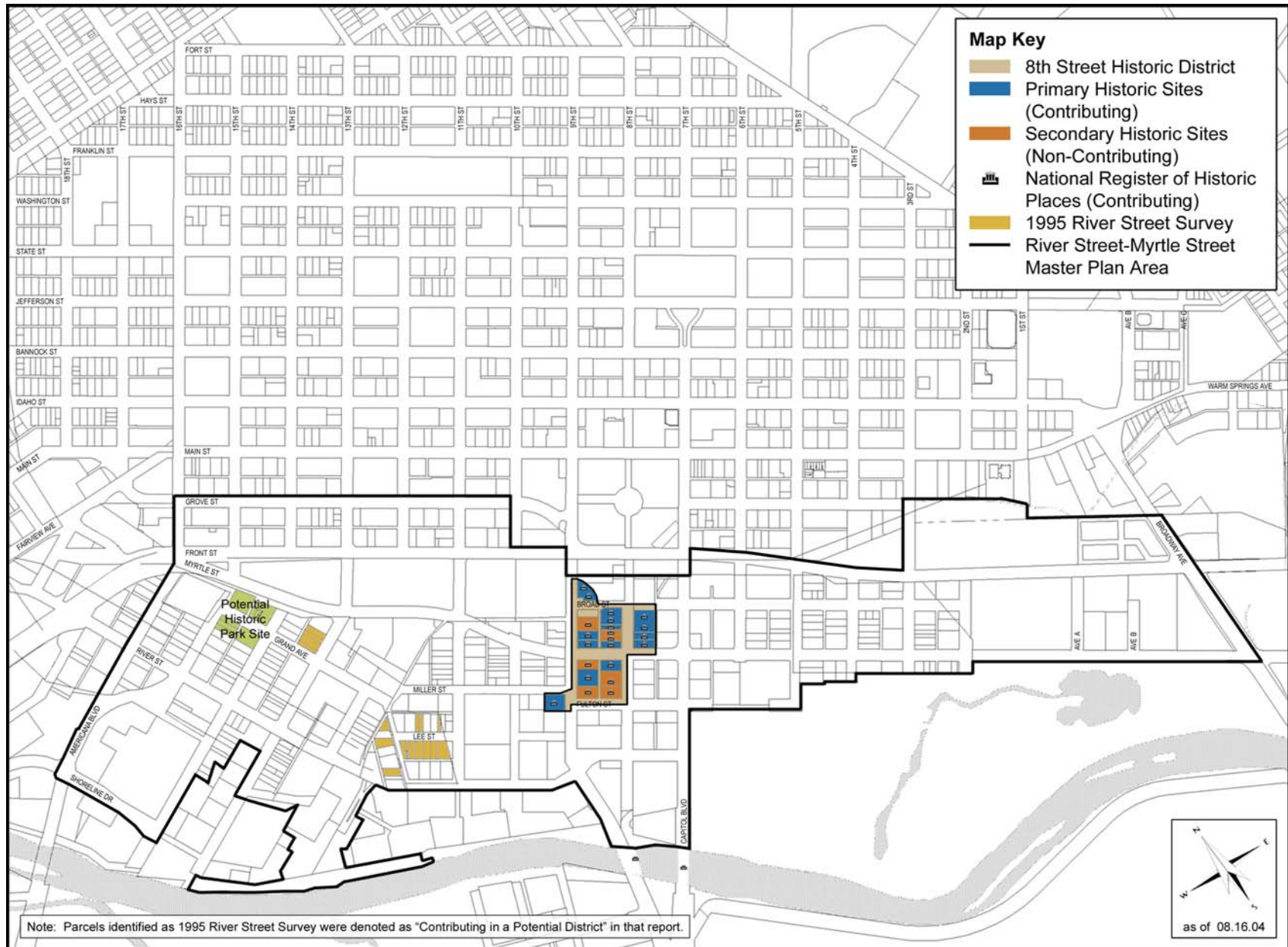
Existing Conditions

The River–Myrtle planning area is distinguished by a notable collection of historic commercial buildings and warehouses between Front, Capitol, Myrtle and 9th. These beautiful brick buildings that form intact block faces have been included in a historic district established by Boise City (see Figure 6). Two additional areas in the River Street neighborhood have been studied for possible inclusion in a historic district: houses located on Lee and Ash streets, and a commercial building and houses on 13th Street between Myrtle Street and Grand Avenue. In addition there are houses from the late 1800s and early 1900s in the Parkside neighborhood, although their historic value has not been evaluated.

The buildings along 8th Street in the Warehouse/Cultural District provide an irreplaceable link to Boise’s history, and add a unique and authentic character to this part of the River–Myrtle planning area. A succession of property owners has viewed them as worth saving and renovating. The BoDo project currently under construction builds upon this existing historic fabric and adds new buildings that have a compatible style.

The houses on Lee Street are more problematic. Most if not all of these are rentals. Property values are rising but rents are lagging behind, creating an economic squeeze for the property owners. As the land gets more valuable, it becomes harder to resist clearing these properties and building new development that would generate higher return. The houses on Lee Street are symptomatic of a

Figure 6: Designation of Historic Resources



larger issue in the River–Myrtle planning area, which has a large number of older houses in fair to poor condition in a similar situation. These houses provide not only a historic record of the River Street and Parkside neighborhoods but also a reservoir of affordable housing. If land values continue upward, it will be more and more difficult for property owners to hold onto them. Several courses of action are available including retaining such buildings in place, relocating them or removing them. The plan recommends evaluating if a collection of the best examples of historic residences could be moved to a historic park within the River Street neighborhood while allowing for removal of the remaining houses and redevelopment of these sites.

Desired Outcomes

The exceptional collection of brick warehouses and commercial buildings from the railroad era in the 8th Street Historic District would be preserved, and renovated and reused as part of redevelopment. On occasion, a particular building in this district may have deteriorated to the point it is unsalvageable, and in such cases, the building could be removed. Replacement structures in the historic district would be compatible with the existing historic fabric but may be of a different architectural style. Preservation of historic structures elsewhere in the River–Myrtle planning area is more problematic due to the fact that many of them are single-family houses in fair to poor condition situated on lots that are rising in value. The plan recommends evaluating if some of these houses could be relocated, renovated and preserved in a historic park in the River Street neighborhood.

General guidelines and action steps related to historic resources in the River–Myrtle planning area are stated

here. Specific guidelines and action steps related to 8th Street Historic District are included in the subdistrict plan for the Warehouse/Cultural District. Guidelines regarding the historic houses in the River Street and Parkside neighborhoods are included in the subdistrict plans for those areas. (See Chapter 7 for subdistrict plans.)

Design & Development Guidelines

- 2.1 Whenever feasible, preserve the historic character in areas where historic buildings are concentrated, while encouraging development of underutilized property. If increasing property values and property taxes work against retaining historic buildings, evaluate if the buildings could be moved in order to save them.
- 2.2 Facilitate the renovation and reuse of historic buildings whenever feasible.
- 2.3 Where a historic structure is in poor repair or obsolete, evaluate alternative approaches including reuse of the structure, reuse of the façade or replacement. Weigh the contribution made by the structure to the historic fabric and to the community's record of its history with the benefits derived from redevelopment proposals. Give weight to proposals that result in increasing the supply of housing in the River–Myrtle planning area.
- 2.4 Encourage a range of architectural styles in new buildings in a way that does not detract from areas of historic character in the River–Myrtle planning area.

2.5 Design new infill buildings in areas dominated by historic buildings so they respect the current scale and massing of these buildings although new buildings may have a variety of architectural designs.

Action Steps

- Work with the Boise City Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) to create a method of evaluating redevelopment proposals affecting historic structures. Weigh the assets being gained, preserved and lost, and the degree to which redevelopment will achieve the desired character and preferred development concept stated in this plan. Work with the HPC early in development review process.
- Consult with the HPC when redevelopment proposals involving historic structures are initiated to obtain early input on ways to meet preservation and redevelopment goals.

3.0 Building and Site Design

The 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Plan includes guidelines that apply to building and site design throughout the urban renewal districts in downtown Boise. The purpose of these guidelines is to establish an overall approach to downtown development that is consistent with the principles of compact, mixed-use design established in 1987 with the revision of the Central District plan. These principles have been reaffirmed in the Downtown Boise Plan (1993), Boise City Comprehensive Plan (1997), the River Street–Myrtle

Street Urban Design Plan (1994) and Westside Downtown Framework Master Plan (2001).

This section describes the desired pattern for development intensities in the River–Myrtle planning area. Attention to development intensity is important if the long-term development forecast for the River–Myrtle planning area is to be achieved. This forecast envisions the addition of 2,470 housing units, 1,577,286 square feet of office and 367,405 square feet of retail. This forecast can only be achieved if building densities are increased, which raises issues regarding the current zoning in the River–Myrtle planning area.

Existing Conditions

At present, the River–Myrtle planning area is characterized by relatively low densities throughout the area with the exception of the Courthouse Corridor, the brick buildings in the historic district along 8th Street, a cluster of buildings at the intersection of 13th and River streets (Shoreline Plaza, River Plaza and Community House) and the Pioneer Plaza buildings on Myrtle Street.

The central section of the planning area is zoned C-5, which is the most intense mixed-use zoning district allowed in Boise City. This zoning district has no height limit. It has a 4:1 limit on floor area ratio¹ for office and commercial uses but no limit for residential uses. Most of the remainder is zoned Residential-Office (R-O), which has a typical height limit of 35 feet and 47.5 feet if rooflines are articulated. These height limits indicate that the R-O district anticipates low- to medium-intensity development. Boise City allows these height limits to be exceeded with approval of a conditional use permit by the Planning & Zoning Commission. The intense

development in the Courthouse Corridor, which includes the Ada County Courthouse, Civic Plaza Apartments and Idaho Water Center, is the result of height exceptions being granted.

The R-O zoning district also has a limit of 87.5 units per acre on residential uses. This density limit may need to be raised in the River–Myrtle planning area in order to improve the economic feasibility of building housing as land prices continue to rise here and throughout downtown. Raising densities will also most likely be needed to achieve the amount of housing desired. The plan recommends that the R-O district be re-evaluated and modified if needed, or a new zoning district created, to achieve the objectives in this plan (see Chapter 8).

Desired Outcomes

Figure 7 shows recommended building heights as a way to express the desired development densities in the River–Myrtle planning area. This map illustrates how higher densities would be concentrated in the following areas:

- Courthouse Corridor
- Front Street from 2nd to Capitol Boulevard
- Capitol Boulevard between Myrtle and Front streets
- Area bounded by Front, 9th, River and 11th streets
- Area bounded by Grove, 9th, Front and 13th streets
- Three areas where higher intensity, mixed-use development is anticipated:
 - Pioneer Corridor between the Boise River and River Street

- Area bounded by River (formerly Battery) Street, Capitol Boulevard, Boise River and 9th Street
- Broadway between Front and Myrtle streets

The map also illustrates that lower densities would occur in the areas anticipated to be residential neighborhoods, properties in the Warehouse/Cultural District in and adjacent to the historic district, and properties west of 13th Street.

Design and Development Guidelines

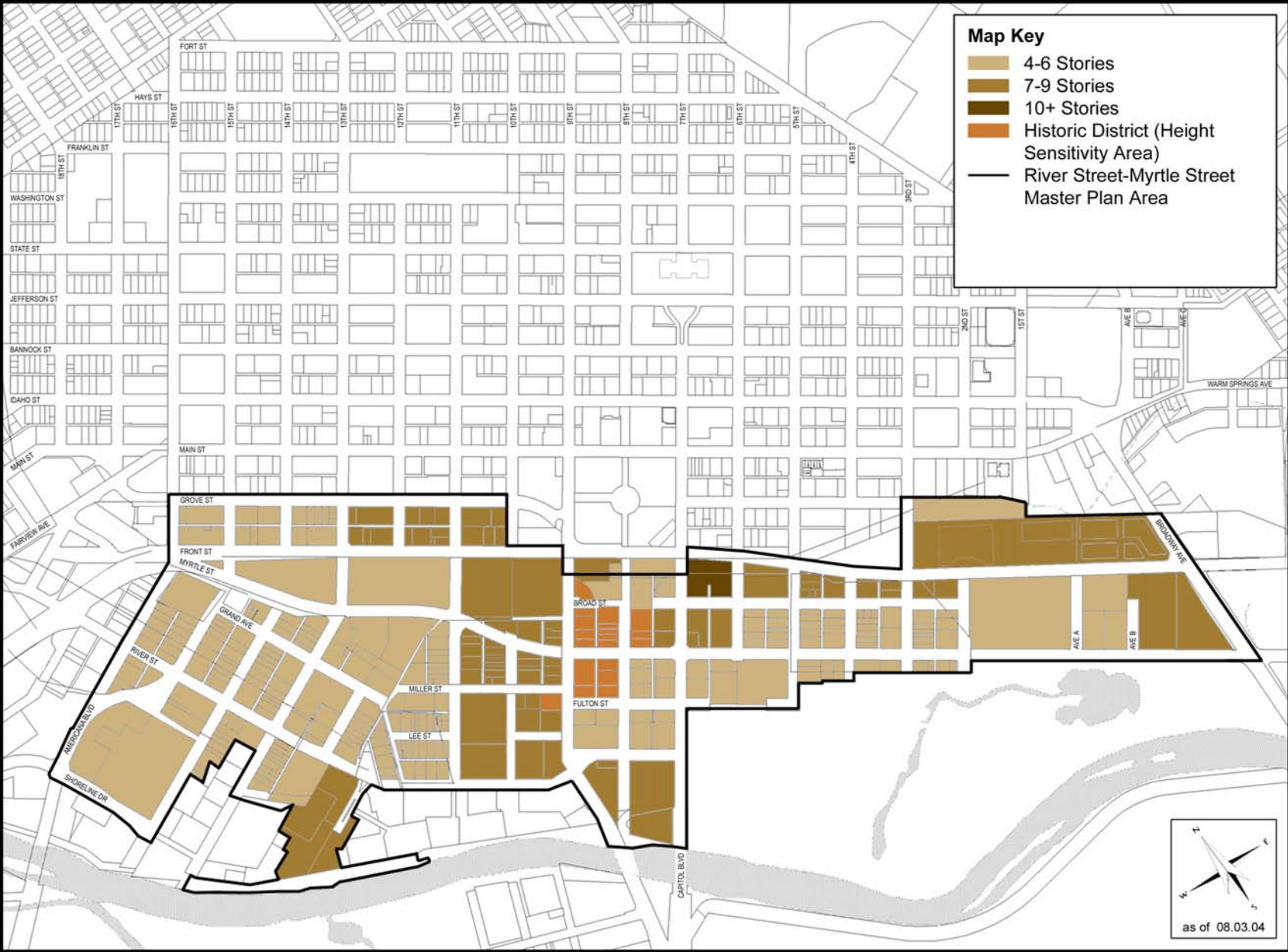
- 3.1 Use the Built Form map (Figure 7) to guide decisions regarding development intensities when entering into development partnerships and commenting on development proposals.
- 3.2 Apply the Design and Development Guidelines regarding building and site design contained in the 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Plan to development proposals in the River–Myrtle planning area.

Action Steps

- Evaluate whether the existing R-O zoning district needs to be revised to better support plan goals for an urban level of intensity in the River–Myrtle planning area. Propose revisions to R-O or develop a new zoning category if needed to allow higher development densities particularly for housing.

¹ Floor area ratio (FAR) is the ratio of gross floor area of a building to the total land area of the site on which the building is located. In zoning regulations, limits on floor area ratios are used as a way to control the amount of building area constructed on a given building site. For example, a limit of 4:1 on floor area ratio means that four square feet of built for every one square foot of site area.

Figure 7: Built Form



- Re-evaluate the use of the R-O zoning district in areas where actual development consistently exceeds the typical density limits for this district, and determine if these areas should be rezoned to a different zoning category. Where warranted initiate a rezoning proposal for consideration by the city council.
- Evaluate if minimum densities need to be added to zoning categories affecting the River–Myrtle planning area to achieve plan goals for development densities, and propose zoning revisions as needed.

4.0 Street Character, Civic Spaces and Pedestrian Ways

Places are shaped not only by buildings but also by the public realm that forms the setting for buildings. The public realm includes streets, sidewalks, parks, plazas and other public places. The public realm can become a focal point that lends identity to a place. Public places can contribute to the beauty, enjoyment, livability and vitality of their surroundings when they are designed and located well. Improvements to the public realm can have a beneficial effect on the desirability of a particular area and serve as catalysts for development—such as the addition of a park to a neighborhood.

Street Character

How street rights-of-way are designed and improved affects what types of land uses are likely to locate along them, whether pedestrians and bicyclists feel comfortable using them and the ambience of the surrounding area. Right-of-way improvements include how the street itself

is designed and improved and how the area between the curb and the private property line is treated, otherwise known as streetscaping. Streetscaping includes how the sidewalk is paved and the use of street trees, lighting and furnishings. Adjusting how streets are designed and improved can influence the land-use mix and character of the surrounding area, and improve its livability for people. The River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan includes recommended streetscape treatments for each street in the River–Myrtle planning area. These recommendations are based on how the street functions, the existing character of the area surrounding the street or the desired future character for this area. In most cases, a street in the River–Myrtle planning area has more than one designation because the purpose of the street and character of its surroundings change along its route. Figure 8 shows the streetscaping treatments recommended for each street in the River–Myrtle planning area. These are described under Desired Outcomes – Street Character.

Existing Conditions – Street Character

The River–Myrtle planning area has the full range of street types. At one end of the spectrum, it has tree-lined neighborhood streets that are comfortable for pedestrians and bicyclists to use and where traffic moves slowly. These streets work well with residential development of all types, low- to medium-density office and neighborhood retail. On the other end of the spectrum, the planning area is traversed from east to west by the Connector, which consists of two five-lane streets—Front and Myrtle—paired as a couplet. These major thoroughfares provide excellent vehicular access and visibility but are intimidating for pedestrians and bicyclists. They also exert a strong influence on the types of land uses that are developing in the Courthouse Corridor. The severity of Front Street has limited

adjacent new development to high-intensity office and institutional uses and a warehouse grocery store. The only new residential development—Civic Plaza Apartments—is actually set back from Front Street by 120 feet. Retail space built as part of the Courthouse Corridor project has been very difficult to lease. One of the reasons is that high-volume streets such as Front Street do not work well as local or community shopping streets. Major mixed-use and destination-type retail centers that exert a regional draw, however, could work on the Connector. They benefit from the ease of access and are strong enough to draw people off the Connector and create their own internal sense of place.

Americana Boulevard and 16th, 15th and River streets are examples of streets that fall between the two ends of the spectrum. They are wider, higher-volume streets that have sidewalks, and except for River Street, have bicycle lanes. Medium- to high-density office, residential and community commercial uses work well with these types of streets.

The streetscapes in the River–Myrtle planning area vary in quality, ranging from excellent to poor. In many cases the quality is uneven within a block or between blocks on the same street. There is little consistency. Portions of 14th, 13th, 12th, Grand, Ash, Miller, Lee and 4th streets have wide tree lawns with mature trees. There are mature trees in tree grates along 8th Street from Front Street to River (formerly Battery) Street. New street trees and sidewalks have been installed with recent developments such as Pioneer Plaza, River Plaza, Shoreline Plaza, Orthopedic Surgery Center, CW Moore Building, Ada County Courthouse and Administration Building, Idaho Water Center and Kreizenbeck Building. On the other hand, there are streets lacking street trees in all of the subdistricts. There are areas in the Warehouse/Cultural District

that lack sidewalks. There are also sections of sidewalk in this subdistrict that have stamped-concrete paving that is deteriorating to the point where it is difficult to walk on.

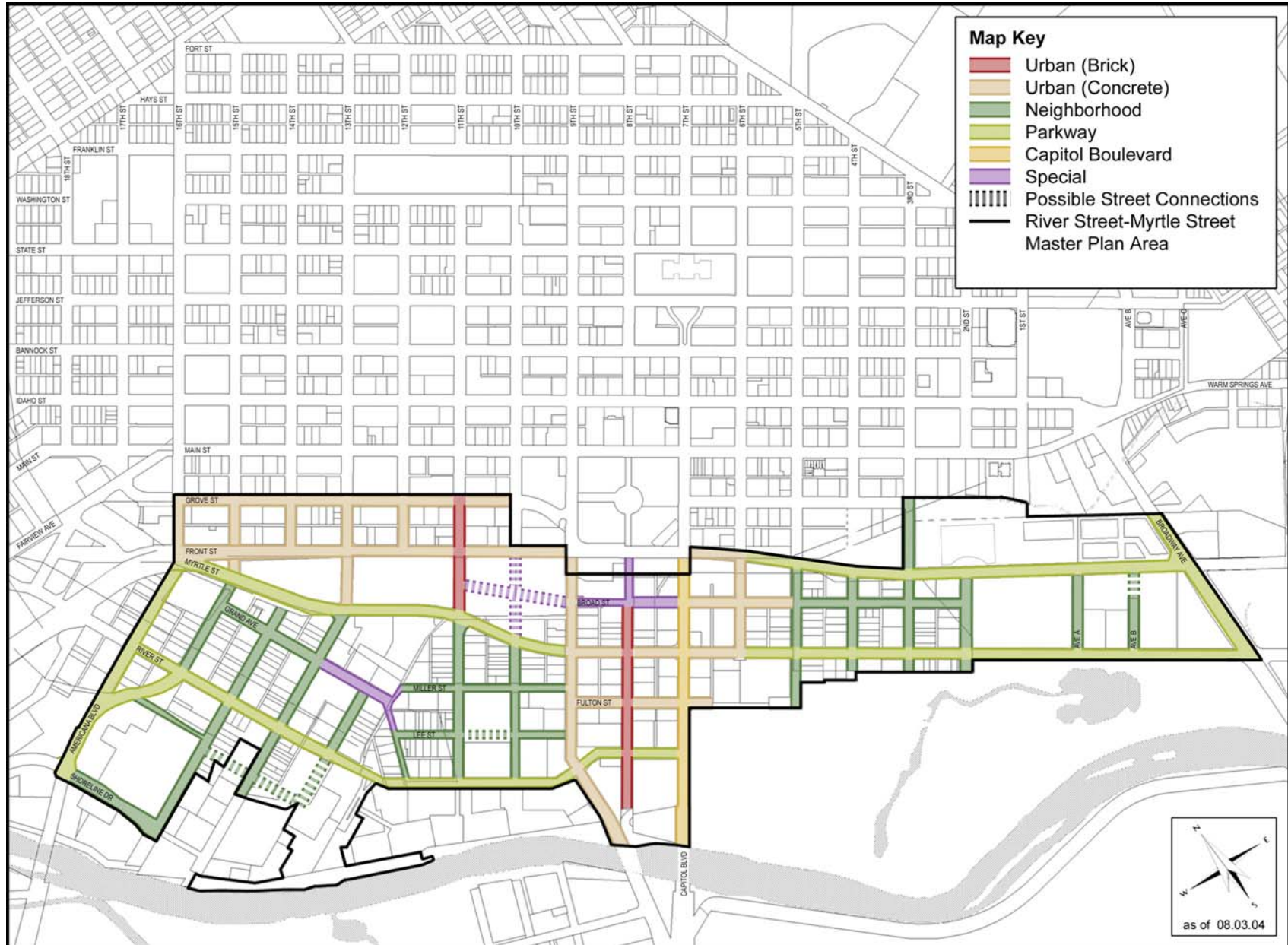
Desired Outcomes – Street Character

Achieving the preferred development concept for the River–Myrtle planning area depends in part on creating an attractive setting for the types of land uses identified as desirable in this concept, and on encouraging new development and redevelopment in general. The preferred development concept emphasizes creating subdistricts with a mix of uses such that people are able to live, work, shop, socialize and play in downtown Boise. So it becomes important to create streets that welcome a wide range of uses. This plan gives attention to how streets are improved so they will make a positive contribution to creating this setting and to the livability of the areas surrounding them.

The 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Plan sets standards for the different streetscape treatments used in the downtown urban renewal districts. These standards address the width and types of paving used, spacing of street trees and historic street lights and the placement of planters, benches and trash containers. They also specify if paving is used from the building face to the curb (considered an urban treatment) or if a tree lawn is used between the sidewalk and the curb (considered a neighborhood treatment). Streetscape treatments are designed to complement the existing character of an area or are used to transform the character of an area as it develops or redevelops. Descriptions of the types of streetscape treatments used in the 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Plan are provided below. Figure 8 shows where these treatments are expected to be used in River–Myrtle planning area.

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- **Urban:** The urban-style streetscape is generally used in business and mixed-use districts where there is a concentration of higher-intensity development, ground floor retail, restaurants and entertainment uses and on-street parking. Urban sidewalks are designed for heavy pedestrian use and are often lined by retail or similar uses in a dense urban environment. They may also serve offices and housing at street level when such uses are located in business or mixed-use districts rather than neighborhoods. The urban streetscape standard for downtown Boise has either concrete or brick paving from the inner edge of the sidewalk (usually at the building line) and the curb. Brick is used in areas where there is particular emphasis on aesthetics in order to create a distinctive place within the larger downtown.
 - **Neighborhood:** The neighborhood-style streetscape is used in areas of downtown that have less intense development with a higher proportion of residential uses and more limited retail and office uses. It is designed to accommodate pedestrian traffic in locations where a residential neighborhood character is desired. The distinguishing characteristic of this style of streetscaping is the use of tree lawns between the sidewalk and the street, rather than continuing the sidewalk surface to the curb. The intent of the neighborhood streetscape is to create a pleasant pedestrian environment and encourage walking as an alternative to using an automobile. The neighborhood streetscape is compatible with housing, office and neighborhood-level retail uses.
 - **Parkway:** The urban parkway treatment is used on major streets that carry higher volumes of traffic at faster speeds than is typical for the downtown core. The intent of using a parkway treatment is to provide beautification of significant streets such as State Street and the Connector and create both a comfortable walking environment for pedestrians and an enjoyable driving experience. Harrison Boulevard through the North End neighborhood is an example of a parkway street that accomplishes all of these goals. The streetscaping standards for parkway streets include wider sidewalks and use a double rather than single row of street trees to make a strong visual statement and provide a buffer between pedestrians and relatively heavy auto and truck traffic.
 - **Capitol Boulevard:** Capitol Boulevard has a special status in the Boise City Zoning Ordinance, which establishes the Capitol Boulevard Special Design District. This design district includes a description of the streetscaping to be done along its edge.
 - **Special:** The special street designation is used for particular street segments where an extraordinary pedestrian emphasis and placemaking effort is planned and warranted. A special street may function as both a street and also as a public space for sidewalk cafes, street fairs, festivals, cultural and special events. The best examples in downtown Boise are 8th Street between Bannock and Main and the Basque Block on Grove between Capitol Boulevard and 6th Street. It may be open or closed to vehicular traffic, or may be designed to allow temporary traffic closures. Each special street is expected to have a unique design often celebrating a particular theme.

Figure 8: Streetscape Character



Civic Spaces & Pedestrian Ways

Existing Conditions – Civic Spaces & Pedestrian Ways

Figure 9 depicts the existing civic spaces in and adjacent to the River–Myrtle planning area. The most significant public spaces include Julia Davis and Ann Morrison parks, the Boise River and the greenbelt along its banks. They represent invaluable assets to the River–Myrtle planning area because of their proximity and the incomparable facilities and natural features they offer. The Boise River is a year-round river bordered by a 70-foot wide greenbelt and pathway for walking and bicycling that extends 26 miles. Julia Davis and Ann Morrison parks contain extensive green space, totaling to 133 acres within walking distance of the River–Myrtle planning area. Ann Morrison Park includes athletic fields, tennis courts, disc golf course, a playground and picnic sites. Julia Davis Park includes major cultural facilities for the city and state—the Boise Art Museum, Idaho State Historical Museum, Idaho Black History Museum, Zoo Boise, Discovery Center of Idaho and the Gene Harris Bandshell as well as tennis courts, playground, picnic sites, rose garden and lagoon with paddle boats.

Within the River–Myrtle planning area, the public realm is much more modest and needs attention. There is a tot lot at the intersection of Grand Avenue and Ash Street in the River Street neighborhood. It includes playground equipment for young children but is on a very small site. The Pioneer Walkway—an asphalt walking path—runs from the Boise River through the River Street neighborhood to the intersection of 11th and Myrtle. It provides an off-street walking and bicycling route but it does not have a strong presence and

its northern end appears to disappear into an apartment development; consequently, it is not well-known or well-used. The Log Cabin Literary Center and Anne Frank Human Rights Memorial are located in the Cultural District at the south end of 8th Street. The grounds provide green space, seating, a beautiful water feature and food for thought in the form of quotations on human rights. There is a plaza at 8th and Front streets, but it lacks amenities that would attract people to use it for anything more than a walking route to other destinations.

The Courthouse Corridor contains several public spaces that add to the ambience of this area. These include the plaza in front of the Ada County Courthouse at 2nd and Front streets and the pedestrian promenade that connects the county building to the Idaho Water Center at Front and Broadway. The courthouse plaza is paved with brick and includes a cascading water feature. The pedestrian promenade has been improved with brick pavers, planters, seating and lighting that create an attractive place for people to gather. Civic Plaza Apartments face onto the promenade and so the residents have the benefit of this public space at their doorstep. Across the promenade from the apartments, one of the building sites in the Courthouse Corridor is covered by lawn for now, and so it provides green space, albeit temporary in nature. It is unknown if residents in the apartments, workers in the area or people in general will be able to use this green space other than as visual open space. There are no public spaces in the West Connector and East Connector/Parkside subdistrict beside street rights-of-way.

Eighth Street functions as the primary north-south pedestrian and bicycling route through the River–Myrtle

Figure 9: Civic Spaces



planning area, and as such contributes to the people-oriented public space in this area. Certain other streets could become a network of pedestrian-oriented routes with additional improvements. The existing and potential primary pedestrian streets are shown in Figure 9. The Pioneer Walkway that runs from the Boise River Greenbelt at approximately 12th Street to the intersection of Myrtle and 11th streets is a modest asphalt pathway at present, but has significant potential to become a grand, boulevard-style pedestrian and bicycle link through the River Street neighborhood.

Desired Outcomes - Civic Spaces & Pedestrian Ways

The River–Myrtle planning area would benefit from more attention to the public realm. The desired character for this area would include celebrating Americana Boulevard, Broadway Avenue, and 15th, Front and Myrtle streets as gateway streets by transforming them into urban parkways. They would remain primary routes for vehicular traffic but richer, more systematic streetscaping would improve the pedestrian environment on these streets. Capitol Boulevard would receive special treatment befitting its ceremonial status as the connection between the Boise Depot and the Idaho State Capitol Building. Local streets in the River Street and Parkside neighborhoods would be lined with trees and tree lawns on a more consistent basis, creating a lush, green environment and a respite from the more formal urban places elsewhere in the planning area. This streetscaping treatment would signal a shift in atmosphere and provide an attractive setting for new residential development, and make existing residences more desirable.

The Pioneer Corridor would be improved to its potential consistent with the concepts developed in the winning design from the Pioneer Corridor design competition. It would provide structure and a sense of place for the neighborhood and a catalyst for new development and redevelopment. It would be extended from the intersection of 11th and Myrtle along 11th and Broad streets and then along 8th Street to The Grove Plaza—creating a continuous pedestrian link from the Boise River to the CBD.

New civic spaces would be added at neighborhood focal points, along the Pioneer Corridor and in the Court-house Corridor. These civic spaces would provide refreshing and delightful gathering places for people to enjoy and would help create a sense of community in the various subdistricts.

Figure 9 shows both the existing and proposed civic spaces in and adjacent to the River–Myrtle planning area. These include parkway streets, primary pedestrian streets, parks, plazas and promenades and pedestrian links.

The guidelines that follow focus on general principles regarding street character, civic spaces and pedestrian ways. They also include specific guidelines for the Connector and Capitol Boulevard. Design parameters for these two streets appear here because they are located in more than one subdistrict. (Section 5.0 includes additional guidelines and action steps regarding these streets from a transportation standpoint.) The subdistrict plans describe in more detail where new civic spaces should be added to the River–Myrtle planning area and action steps for getting them built.

Design and Development Guidelines

Street Character

- 4.1 Create a hierarchy of streets that serves the needs of the River–Myrtle planning area not only by traffic capacity but also by design treatment of sidewalks, crosswalks, streetscapes, lighting and furnishings.
- 4.2 Use streetscaping to create a street character that is compatible with desired land uses so street design supports implementation of the preferred development concept.
- 4.3 Use the Streetscape Character map (Figure 8) to identify the type of streetscape treatment required for the streets in the River–Myrtle planning area. Apply the streetscape design standards from the 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Plan when streetscapes are improved in the River–Myrtle area. Implement these standards at the time properties are developed or redeveloped and as part of the capital improvement program for the River Myrtle–Old Boise Urban Renewal District.
- 4.4 Use streetscapes to create pedestrian-friendly streets with continuous tree coverage especially in areas planned to be residential neighborhoods.
- 4.5 Find an appropriate balance between the Connector’s roles as a vehicular route through downtown and as an element of the public realm. Minimize the tendency of the Connector to divide downtown and interrupt pedestrian and bicycle routes. Make design and streetscaping improvements to the Connector to create a more people-friendly environment along its edge and at crossing points.

- 4.6 Transform the Connector into a set of boulevard-style streets through improved roadway design and streetscaping that provide a calmer, more enjoyable driving experience and improve the pedestrian environment along their edges.
- 4.7 Work with property owners along the Connector, and consider acquisition of additional right-of-way, to create a series of open spaces along its length that will vary the visual width of the corridor, add visual interest and slow driving speeds so the Connector becomes more integrated with the surrounding urban environment.
- 4.8 Improve Capitol Boulevard as a grand, ceremonial-style street consistent with the Capitol Boulevard Plan and Special Design District.

Civic Spaces & Pedestrian Ways

- 4.9 Create civic spaces in each of the subdistricts in the River–Myrtle planning area that will become focal points, promote urban vitality and serve as catalysts for development and redevelopment. Locate, design and furnish public spaces so they attract people to use and enjoy them.
- 4.10 Focus on the locations identified for civic spaces in the subdistrict plans as having highest priority for design and implementation. Refer to the guidelines in the subdistrict plans for specific guidance on the purpose of these spaces, and how they should be designed and developed (see Chapter 7).
- 4.11 Wherever feasible, convert the open spaces along the Connector described in Guideline 4.7 into civic spaces where people activity would occur. Use these

spaces to create a series of places along the Connector, moderate its linear nature and integrate it into the fabric of downtown Boise.

4.12 Make the Connector conducive to pedestrian use by adding signals that allow more frequent, protected crossing points. Place signals at the same cross streets on both Front and Myrtle so protected pedestrian and bicycle routes are created.

4.13 Encourage the inclusion of well-designed and functional public space in private developments.

Action Steps

Street Character

- Create a capital investment plan for streetscaping in the River–Myrtle planning area, including an estimated schedule for construction. Use this schedule to identify projects for inclusion in CCDC’s annual budget and proceed with construction as funding permits.
- Determine if current setback requirements along the Connector allow a boulevard-style treatment to be implemented, and modify them if necessary to achieve this objective.
- Evaluate requiring a minimum 15- to 20-foot building setback on Front Street to allow for an 8-foot sidewalk flanked on either side by a row of street trees in order to create a more appealing walking environment for pedestrians. Increase sidewalk widths in areas having high pedestrian volumes.

- Evaluate requiring a minimum 15- to 20-foot building setback on Myrtle Street to allow for a 6-foot sidewalk flanked on either side by a row of street trees in order to create a more appealing walking environment for pedestrians. Increase sidewalk widths in areas having high pedestrian volumes.
- Convert setbacks along the Connector to build-to lines to assure that development is placed at the edge of the streetscaping treatment on these streets. (See the 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Plan for specific streetscaping standards for the Connector.) Allow for exceptions to create plazas and other outdoor civic spaces that enhance the people environment.
- Work with Boise City to add the revised Capitol Boulevard Design Standards into the Capitol Boulevard Design District regulations and obtain approval for a memorandum of agreement among Boise City, CCDC and Ada County Highway District (ACHD) to implement these standards. Create an implementation plan that includes identifying funding sources and a schedule for construction.

Civic Spaces & Pedestrian Ways

- Create a capital investment plan for civic spaces in the River–Myrtle planning area, including an estimated schedule for construction. Use this schedule to identify projects for inclusion in CCDC’s annual budget and proceed with construction as funding permits.

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- Refer to subdistrict plans for specific action steps regarding civic spaces and pedestrian ways (see [Chapter 7](#)).

5.0 Transportation & Parking

Transportation systems provide the means by which people make connections between where they live, work and carry out other activities in their lives. Parking becomes an essential part of the transportation system when people travel by car. How these systems function affects the quality of life for people, costs to taxpayers and consumers and the health of the environment. This section describes the existing situation and the desired future outcomes related to transportation and parking for the River–Myrtle planning area. These descriptions are followed by objectives, guidelines and action steps designed to guide future decisions regarding transportation and parking in this area of downtown so needs for these services and facilities are well-served.

Transportation

Existing Transportation Conditions

The River–Myrtle planning area has an extensive road system, ranging from neighborhood streets to the Connector, which consists of two five-lane roadways and is part of the federal highway system. The Idaho Transportation Department is responsible for design, construction and maintenance related to the Connector, but has delegated traffic operations on this thoroughfare to ACHD. All other streets are owned, operated and maintained by ACHD.

In addition to the Connector, there are several major streets capable of carrying higher volumes of traffic and providing direct routes to, from or through the planning area. These include:

- Capitol Boulevard and 9th Street, which run north and south through the center of the planning area and are paired as a couplet
- Americana and 15th, which run along the western edge and are paired as a couplet
- Broadway along the eastern edge
- River Street, which runs east and west along the lower edge of the planning area

Within portions of the West Connector and the River Street Neighborhood subdistrict and in the entire Warehouse/Cultural District and the East Connector/Parkside subdistrict, there is a grid street system that goes back to the earliest recorded plats in Boise. Within this system, there are several local streets that provide through routes that are much quieter and more pleasant than the higher-volume streets such as the Connector and 9th and Capitol. These include 3rd, 8th, 11th, 13th, Grand Avenue and Miller, Fulton and Broad streets. The River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan envisions these people-friendly streets forming a network that would allow local traffic to flow within and between subdistricts without drivers having to use the larger, more congested streets. They would also serve as pedestrian and bicycle routes that would encourage people living and working in the River–Myrtle planning area to travel by these alternative modes. (See Figure 9 for the location of existing and proposed primary pedestrian streets and an illustration of the network that they form.)

Levels of Service (LOS)

Level of Service or LOS is a term used by traffic engineers to qualitatively describe operating conditions for automobile travel on existing or planned roadways. Typical traffic characteristics described by LOS include: speed, travel time, maneuverability, traffic interruptions, driver comfort and driver convenience. Similar to a report card, LOS grades roadway conditions from “A” to “F” with “A” representing the best driving conditions and “F” the worst. LOS E represents the capacity threshold of a given roadway. The LOS grades for roadway facilities are generally defined as follows:

- LOS A represents free-flow travel with an excellent level of comfort and convenience and the freedom to maneuver.
- LOS B has stable operating conditions, but the presence of other road users causes a noticeable, though slight, reduction in comfort, convenience and maneuvering freedom.
- LOS C has stable operating conditions, but the operation of individual users is substantially affected by the interaction with others in the traffic stream.
- LOS D represents high-density, but stable flow. Users experience severe restriction in speed and freedom to maneuver, with poor levels of comfort and convenience.
- LOS E represents operating conditions at or near capacity. Speeds are reduced to a low but relatively uniform value. Freedom to maneuver is difficult with users experiencing frustration and poor comfort and convenience. Unstable operation is frequent, and minor disturbances in traffic flow can cause breakdown conditions.
- LOS F is used to describe forced or breakdown conditions. This condition exists wherever the volume of traffic exceeds the capacity of the roadway. Long queues can form behind these bottleneck points with queued traffic travelling in a stop-and-go fashion. Signalized intersections do not clear in one signal cycle.

Desired Transportation Outcomes

The long-term forecast for future development in downtown Boise anticipates a substantial increase in office, retail and residential development in the River–Myrtle planning area by 2025 (see Chapter 4). This forecast was prepared as part of the Downtown Boise Mobility Study (DBMS) in 2004 and used to model future traffic demand on the downtown street system.

The DBMS proposes a policy that a level of service (LOS) of D is acceptable during peak hours on downtown streets (see sidebar). This policy recognizes that downtown is more congested than is typical in other areas of Boise, and a certain level of congestion is an acceptable trade-off in order to maintain downtown Boise as the region’s urban center. The traffic analysis showed that a number of intersections in the River–Myrtle planning area will have a level of service (LOS) of E or F in 2025 during peak hours. These include all intersections on Front and Myrtle except 11th and Myrtle, Grove and 9th, Grove and 6th, Main and 9th, Main and 6th, Broadway and University, Lincoln and University, Capitol and University, River and 9th and Americana and Shoreline.

Most of the congestion predicted by the traffic model is associated with commuter traffic between the region and downtown since downtown is expected to continue growing as an employment center.

Creating a multimodal transportation system for downtown Boise that encourages use of transit, bicycling and walking as alternatives to the use of personal vehicles is one way to address this situation. If downtown continues to grow as the employment, educational

and cultural center of the region, it will cause more and more people to travel there. The DBMS acknowledges that for the foreseeable future, most of the people coming to downtown Boise will travel by automobile. In the short term, the DBMS advocates creating a downtown transportation system will allow people to arrive in downtown, park their car once, and travel in downtown using other modes—walking, bicycling or transit. It recommends improvements to streets so they are safer and more attractive as pedestrian and bicycle routes and establishing a wayfinding system that would encourage downtown residents, workers and visitors to walk or bicycle on these streets instead of using their cars. The DBMS also recommends the creation of downtown circulator that would connect together the geographic areas and activity centers in downtown. A portion of the proposed downtown circulator route uses Capitol Boulevard and 9th Street and goes through the River–Myrtle planning area.

Protecting bicycle commute routes from neighborhoods on the periphery of downtown is a second way to encourage the use of alternative modes. Downtown Boise is surrounded by a number of well-established neighborhoods that are within a practical distance for bicycle commuting. Creating routes that make bicycle commuting attractive is important to promoting this method of travel. Many routes are available from neighborhoods on the north and west side of downtown. Routes to neighborhoods on the east and south are much more constrained. For example, for neighborhoods south of the Boise River and on the Boise Bench, there are only three main crossing points over the Boise River into downtown: Broadway at the east end of the River–Myrtle planning area, Americana at the west end

and, in the center, the three bridges carrying 9th Street, 8th Street and Capitol Boulevard. There are also two pedestrian bridges that provide a means of crossing the Boise River from the south.¹ For people crossing at the center point, using 8th Street as the route to and from downtown is the most practical choice because of heavy traffic on both Capitol Boulevard and 9th Street. Retaining 8th Street as a bicycle route, therefore, becomes important to promoting bicycle commuting. (The same is true for retaining bicycle lanes on 13th and 15th through the North End neighborhood, on Bannock to the Veterans Park neighborhood, and on Warm Springs Avenue through the East End neighborhood.) Eighth Street runs through the center of the River–Myrtle planning area and so this plan addresses the importance of retaining 8th Street as a bicycle route in the guidelines below.

Improving the regional transit system is a third way to reduce traffic congestion in downtown. Having a more wide-reaching and effective transit system will allow commuters to leave their car at home and travel to downtown by commuter rail, light rail, commuter bus or vanpools.

Establishing a balanced mix of land uses so that people can live, work, shop, socialize and play without having to use a car is a fourth way to reduce not only traffic congestion but the amount of capital expended on transportation infrastructure. The River Street–Myrtle

Street Master Plan advocates creating a balanced land-use mix in the River–Myrtle planning area, and places particular emphasis on expanding the supply and range of housing to achieve this mix. The objective of building more housing in the River Street neighborhood, Warehouse/Cultural District and the Parkside neighborhood is both a transportation strategy and a land-use strategy.

Parking

Existing Parking Conditions

Most of the parking available in the River–Myrtle planning area is in surface lots. Extensive structured parking has been built in the Courthouse Corridor to support the Ada County Courthouse, the Civic Plaza apartments and the Idaho Water Center and additional development expected in the future. The City Centre Parking Garage at Front Street between 8th and 9th streets is in the Central Urban Renewal District, but its service area extends into the River–Myrtle planning area.

Desired Parking Outcomes

Surface parking lots tend to sap vitality from their surroundings. When there are numerous large-scale surface parking lots in an area, they tend to discourage pedestrian traffic because they are much less interesting to walk past than buildings. The parking strategy proposed in this plan is threefold:

¹ One of these bridges connects Boise State University (BSU) to Julia Davis Park about midway between Broadway Avenue and Capitol Boulevard, and the other connects Ann Morrison Park to the River Street neighborhood about midway between Americana Boulevard and Capitol Boulevard. Both of these bridges are out of the way for most commuters except that the bridge between BSU and Julia Davis Park provides a direct route for people traveling from school to downtown or living in the neighborhood south of Boise State University and working in downtown.

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- Build public parking garages in areas where high intensity development or concentrations of people activity are expected. Public parking garages are generally available to any member of the public and serve short-term and monthly customers. They are best suited for use by workers, shoppers, visitors and apartment dwellers. They are not well suited to providing parking for homeowners who usually want reserved parking in a secured facility. The River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan identifies five potential sites for additional public parking garages as shown in Figure 10. The site at on the northwest corner of Myrtle and Capitol is the most definite of these five since it is expected to serve the BoDo development. Others include the south end of the Cultural District, two sites in the West Connector subdistrict and a site on Miller Street between 10th and 11th streets .

Additional garages may be needed when the Pioneer Walkway is completed to serve the higher intensity development expected along this pedestrian boulevard, and for the mixed-use projects proposed by this plan at Broadway between Front and Myrtle and on the northeast corner of Americana and Shoreline.

- Rely on private parking garages built by developers. Private garages may be open to the public or reserved for use by people associated with a particular development.

- Rely on surface lots in outlying areas and for lower-intensity or smaller developments. It is likely that surface lots will continue to be built and used in the River–Myrtle planning area for the foreseeable future. Developers are required by Boise City to provide a certain ratio of parking with each new development unless public parking is readily available. Surface lots are the easiest and most cost effective way to meet parking requirements until land values rise to a certain point. Surface lots should be used sparingly and designed carefully so they do not sap the urban vitality of their surroundings.

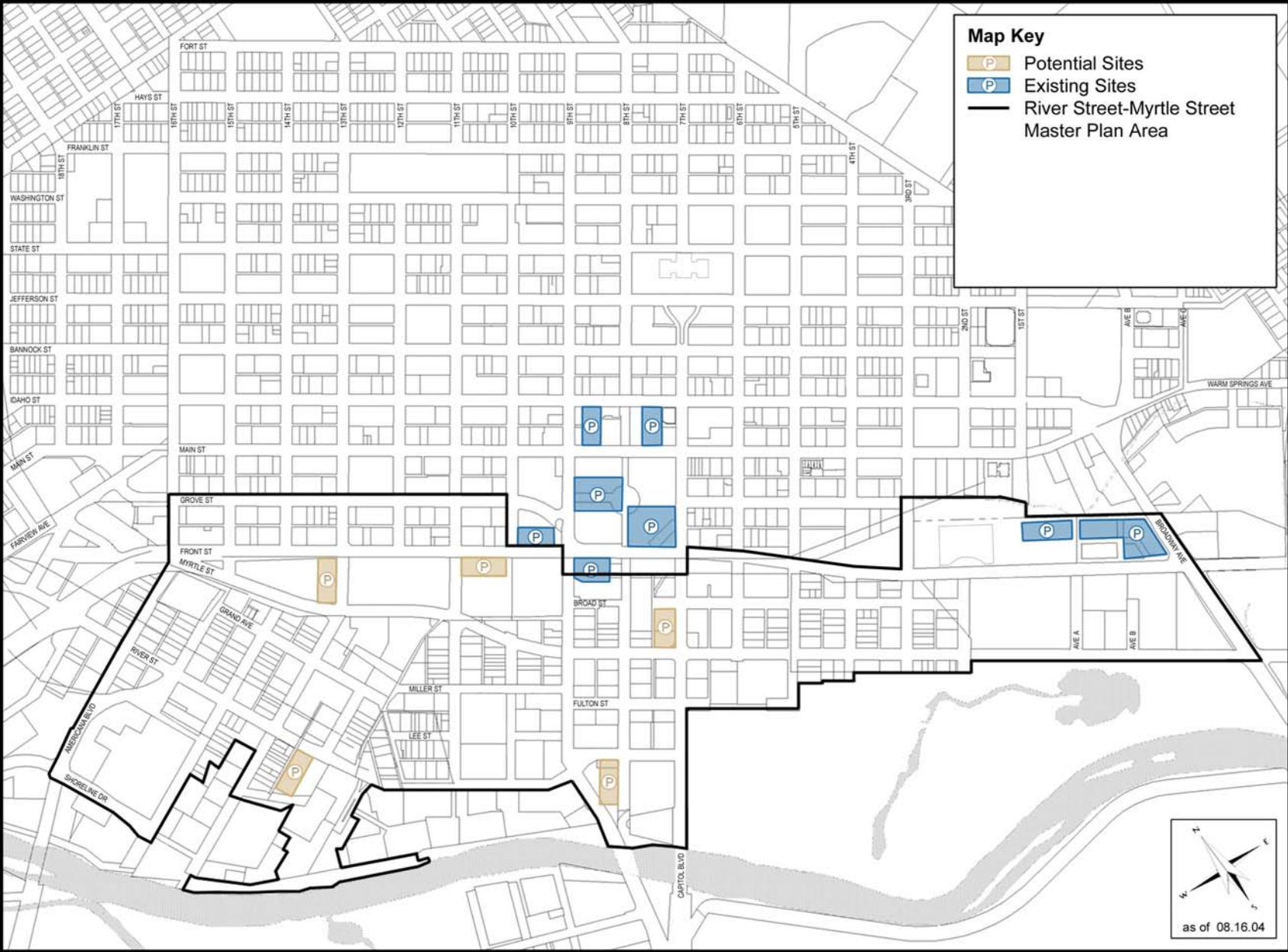
Figure 10 illustrates the existing and proposed public parking facilities in the River–Myrtle planning area and nearby vicinity. It illustrates the concentration of public parking garages in the Central Urban Renewal District and the Courthouse Corridor. Other facilities are proposed in the West Connector to serve a concentration of lodging and destination-style retail, restaurant and tourism uses, in the River Street neighborhood to serve the development along the Pioneer Corridor and in the Warehouse/Cultural District to serve the BoDo development.

Design & Development Guidelines

Transportation

- 5.1 Establish a multimodal system of transportation to serve the River–Myrtle planning area that encourages the use of transit, bicycling and walking as alternative to use of automobiles.

Figure 10: Public Parking Garages



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- 5.2 Pursue a balanced land-use mix, and increase the type and amount of housing available in the River–Myrtle planning area, to increase the likelihood that people can conduct their daily activities without having to resort to cars for transportation and can reduce the demand on transportation and parking facilities.
 - 5.3 Focus on developing thriving residential neighborhoods in the River Street subdistrict, Warehouse/Cultural District and Parkside subdistrict to allow people both to live and work in downtown Boise and reduce demands on the downtown and regional transportation system.
 - 5.4 Establish a downtown circulator that provides a transit alternative for people needing to travel in downtown, and provide service to the River–Myrtle planning area.
 - 5.5 Improve regional transit service to downtown Boise in general and to the River–Myrtle planning area in particular.
 - 5.6 Establish a network of pedestrian-oriented streets between activity centers in the River–Myrtle planning area and in downtown, in order to encourage walking and bicycling over automobile use (see Figure 9).
 - 5.7 Protect bicycle-commuting routes through the River–Myrtle planning area, with particular attention to 8th Street, Americana and Broadway. Avoid changes in street design on these routes that would compromise their use for bicycle commuting.
 - 5.8 Evaluate Parcels A (bounded by 15th, 13th and the Connector) and Parcel B (bounded by 13th, 11th and the Connector) as a possible location for a multimodal center that could include a transfer point between regional and long-haul bus services, shuttle busses and vans, downtown and regional rail transit (if implemented), parking for commuters and other transportation services.
 - 5.9 Recognize that the primary function of the Connector is as a high-capacity roadway carrying traffic to, from and through downtown. Work with ITD and ACHD to include improvements to the Connector recommended by the DBMS in these agencies’ capital improvement plans.
- Parking**
- 5.10 Emphasize the use of parking structures in areas having high-intensity development or concentrations of people activity, and whenever feasible to free land for more productive uses.
 - 5.11 Provide public parking facilities that are convenient for the public, located strategically to support desired land uses, and encourage people to park once and walk, bicycle or use transit to their various destinations in downtown.
 - 5.12 Use structured rather than surface parking whenever possible in order to maximize the use of scarce land resources in the River–Myrtle planning area, create a pedestrian-oriented urban character and reduce the impact parking lots have on urban vitality.

5.13 Design parking structures so they include space for active uses along street frontages at ground level, or are screened from view from the street.

5.14 Design parking structures to include architectural detailing above the street level whenever feasible so these structures contribute to the built environment in a positive way.

5.15 Allow use of surface parking lots in outlying areas and for lower intensity developments with guidelines for their design and placement so their tendency to sap vitality from their surroundings is reduced.

5.16 Design surface parking lots so they are located out of view from the street whenever possible. When placement out of view is not possible, require perimeter fencing or an alternative treatment along street frontages that replicates the traditional street wall or building line on downtown blocks.

See also Design & Development Guidelines for the Connector and Capitol Boulevard under Section 4.0 and Design & Development Guidelines for parking facilities and surface parking lots in the 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Plan.

Action Steps:

Transportation

- Pursue federal funding for implementation of the downtown circulator, and proceed with implementation as funding becomes available.

Create a route on the circulator system that provides service to the subdistricts in the River–Myrtle planning area.

- Support the creation of a dedicated source of funding for regional transit in order to improve service levels for downtown and for the River–Myrtle planning area.
- Install a way-finding signage system that encourages downtown residents, workers and visitors to walk or bicycle in downtown rather than using cars. Use this way-finding system to link the subdistricts in downtown Boise to each other, to the CBD, Cultural District, shopping and entertainment districts, areas where lodging and convention facilities are located, sightseeing opportunities, parks and the Boise River Greenbelt.
- Establish a schedule for improvements to the Connector identified in the DBMS that will reduce traffic congestion on this thoroughfare, enhance the environment for pedestrians and bicyclists, and improve its interface with the urban fabric of downtown. Include the appropriate items from the schedule in the annual budgets for ITD and ACHD.
- Utilize the inside lane on the West Connector as a turning lane with landscaped bulb-outs at intersections to manage street capacity and encourage lower driving speeds.

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- Install traffic signals at 5th and Avenue B on Front; and at 3rd, Avenue A and Avenue B on Myrtle so continuous north-south routes for pedestrians and bicyclists are created through the Courthouse Corridor from Old Boise/Eastside to Julia Davis Park.
 - Install a pedestrian light at 2nd and Front to improve access to the Ada County Courthouse for people walking and bicycling and to reduce jaywalking across Front Street.
 - Time signals so they allow smooth traffic flow along the East and West Connector.
- Parking**
- Acquire sites and construct public parking garages as described in the subdistrict plans (see Chapter 7). Use the provision of public parking facilities to stimulate private development and support catalyst projects.
 - Expand the P-1 parking district to cover the service area of public parking garages when they are added to the parking system.
 - Work with owners of existing private parking lots to make them available in the evening and on weekends for public use to stretch parking resources and reduce the need to build parking facilities.
 - Work with Boise City to adopt design requirements for surface parking lots consistent with Guideline 5.16 above so surface parking lots will make a positive contribution to the urban fabric.
 - Pursue funding for and implement the downtown circulator recommended by the Downtown Boise Mobility Study including service to the River–Myrtle planning area.
 - See also Action Steps under Section 4.0 regarding the Connector and Capitol Boulevard.

7: Subdistrict Plans, Guidelines & Action Steps



The Boise Cultural District is one of five subdistricts in the River–Myrtle planning area. Each has its own character, opportunities and challenges.

The River–Myrtle planning area covers a large area—230 acres—and is the largest of the four planning areas in downtown Boise. It includes several well-defined subdistricts, each with its own character, opportunities and challenges. The River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan was created by examining each of these subdistricts to understand its history, past planning efforts, current conditions, assets, influences at work, suitability for various land uses, availability of land for development and redevelopment and its likely role in the future of the River–Myrtle planning area. Plans for each of the subdistricts were developed based on this analysis, which are presented in this chapter. Five subdistricts have been identified:

- West Connector (Former Rail Yards)
- River Street Neighborhood
- Warehouse/Cultural District

- East Connector/Parkside Neighborhood
- Courthouse Corridor

The subdistrict plans in this chapter identify existing conditions, desired character, objectives, design and development guidelines and action steps for each subdistrict. The subdistricts are shown in Figure 11. These subdistrict plans work in concert with the overall plans that address key issues in the River–Myrtle planning area and cut across subdistrict lines. These issues include:

- Preferred Development Concept
- Preservation, Revitalization & Renewal
- Building & Site Design
- Street Character, Civic Spaces & Pedestrian Ways
- Transportation & Parking

2025 Downtown Redevelopment Plan

The 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Plan is a companion document to the master plans for the downtown urban renewal districts. Each of the master plans addresses key elements such as land use, built form, street character and civic spaces for a specific part of downtown. The 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Plan consolidates this information on maps that show these elements on a downtown-wide basis—thus providing a more holistic view of what the eventual character, form and structure of downtown will be. The 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Plan also includes maps showing pedestrian and bicycle routes, transit routes and parking facilities on an area-wide basis.

General design guidelines and standards for building and site design, civic spaces, streetscaping and urban design that apply to all of the approved urban renewal districts in downtown Boise are set forth in the 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Plan. This approach saves duplication in each master plan. These general guidelines and standards supplement the guidelines and standards contained in Chapters 6 & 7 of this master plan. CCDC considers both the 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Plan and the master plans for the individual urban renewal districts when making decisions regarding public investment and evaluating development proposals.

The plans addressing area-wide issues are presented in Chapter 6.

West Connector (Former Rail Yards)

Existing Conditions

The West Connector subdistrict runs approximately from 9th Street to 15th Street and from Grove Street to Myrtle Street. It comprises two parts:

- Three superblock-sized parcels between Front and Myrtle streets running from 9th to 15th Street that were occupied by rail yards from the 1890s to 1970s until the tracks were removed. They are referred to as parcels A, B and C-D going from west to east. For the most part they are vacant except for a warehouse at 9th Street on parcel D and paved parking lots on the remainder of parcels C-D and the eastern part of parcel B. Tenth and 12th streets do connect through these parcels.
- Five blocks between Front and Grove from 11th to 16th streets which are occupied by service and auto-oriented businesses or are in parking lots or vacant. This area is viewed as a transitional area.

Both areas have changed little since 1994 when the River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Renewal District was formed.

In 2002 the Greater Boise Auditorium District (GBAD) purchased Parcel B for an expansion of the existing convention center. Plans were prepared and approved by Boise City. The GBAD Board of Directors intended to finance the expansion by selling bonds backed by the

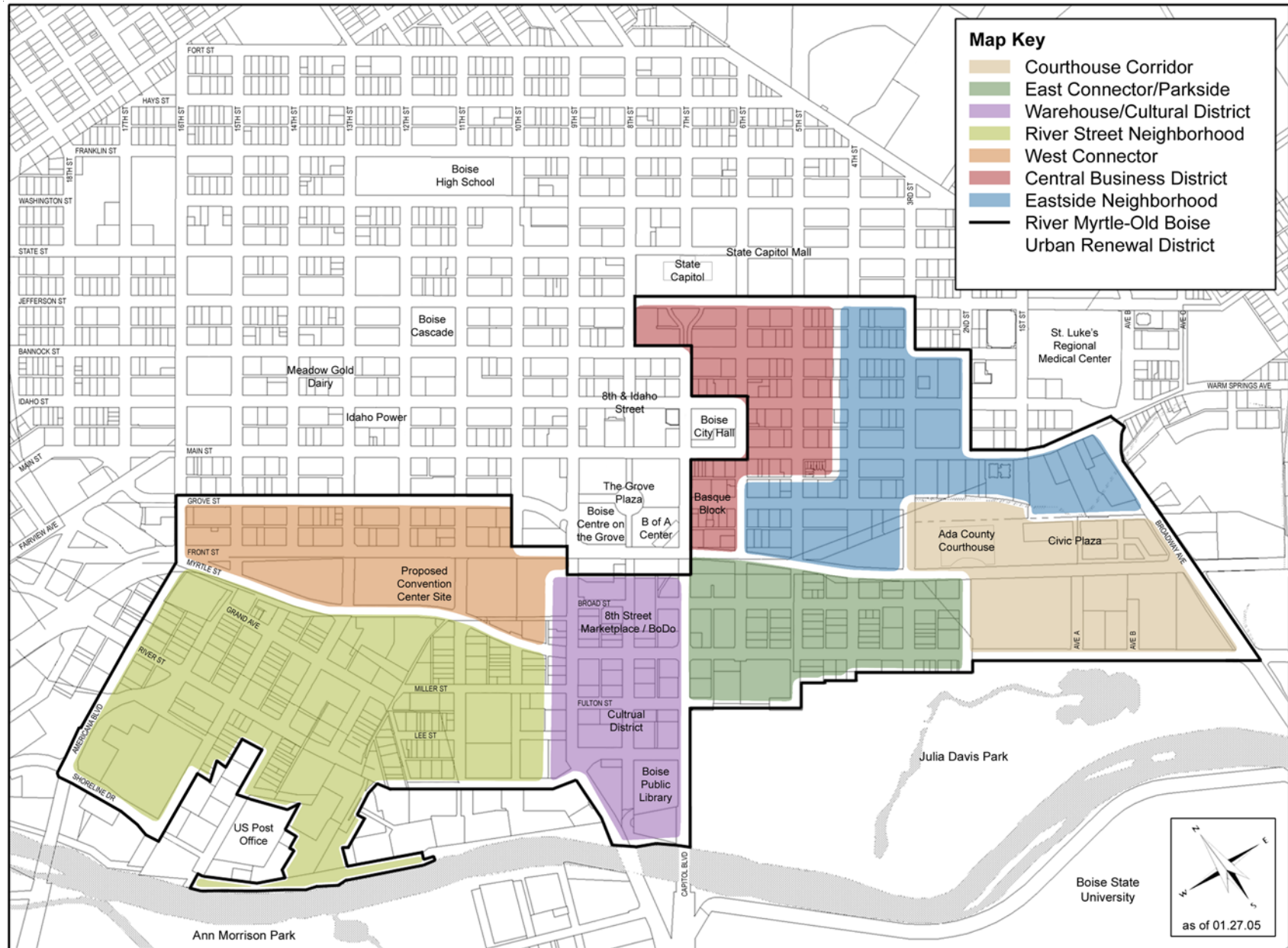
hotel/motel tax that funds the auditorium district. A ballot measure seeking voter approval for issuing the bonds did not pass. It is unknown if the property will be used for the convention center, so the catalyst effect of this facility cannot be assumed. Given this situation, it is necessary to look at alternatives for the future development of the West Connector.

Desired Character

If a new convention center is built and if it is successful, it is likely to stimulate development of hotels, restaurants, retail and other tourism-related uses in close proximity. Without a convention center, Parcel B and most likely Parcels C-D could still attract uses related to tourism given their location relative to the existing convention center and hotels, Bank of America Center, Cultural District and the destination-type retail center planned at 8th and Broad Street (BoDo). Additional destination-type retail, restaurant and entertainment businesses could also locate just west of BoDo. In either case, the challenge is how to provide strong pedestrian connections between these uses and the central business district, so this emerging activity center complements and supports the CBD rather than draining energy from it. The ideal result would be to create a sense of synergy between the CBD and this subdistrict rather than a sense of competition.

Parcel A is considered a possible location for a parking garage for incoming commuters and for uses on Parcels B and C-D, a multimodal station, or for service businesses serving the CBD and the West Connector subdistrict. The current zoning on this parcel is C-2, which allows auto-oriented commercial uses. This zoning designation should be modified to assure

Figure 11: River Myrtle–Old Boise Subdistricts



development will have an urban rather than suburban character. Attention should also be given to how buildings facing 13th Street are designed so they give a pedestrian-oriented feel to this street. Thirteenth Street has been identified as a pedestrian and bicycle route providing an important connection between the River Street Neighborhood, the Westside Downtown district and the CBD.¹

The blocks north of Front Street are quite different from Parcels A, B, and C-D because they are part of the downtown grid, with typical block sizes and street connectivity. They lie along the seam between the central business district, the proposed in-town neighborhood in Westside and the superblocks between Front and Myrtle. The three blocks between 10th and 13th include (from east to west) a full-block parking lot which is a prime development site, a block occupied by buildings originally used for auto-related businesses but which have been renovated into offices to accommodate creative and design-oriented businesses and a heating and air conditioning business. These blocks will most likely feel the ripple effects from creating an activity center focused on tourism and destination-type uses on Parcels B and C-D. There is also a possibility that this area could become a focal point for design-oriented businesses on the edge of the CBD.

The three blocks between 13th and 16th contain service businesses, vacant land and a city fire station. The Connector has a strong impact on the south half of these blocks while the properties on the north half face Grove Street, which is a relatively quiet street. This area could develop in several different ways. It could continue to provide a location for businesses needed by

downtown workers and residents but which are better located on the periphery of the CBD. Such businesses could include auto parts and repair, car wash and detailing, electrical and HVAC installation and repair, a locksmith—all of which are now present in this area. This cluster of service-oriented businesses could also extend south on properties facing 16th Street where Boise Cold Storage is currently located. The properties facing Grove Street could become part of an in-town neighborhood planned for the west end of the Westside District. It is difficult to predict what will happen in this transitional area, but is likely that development will reflect the fact that the parcels are on the edge of both the West Connector and the Westside District and are somewhat hidden by the ramp of the Connector.

The Broadway–Chinden Connector exerts a powerful influence on the types of development seeking to locate along these roadways and the connectivity between the CBD, the Westside Downtown district and the River Street Neighborhood. It also impacts the degree to which a pedestrian-friendly environment can be established along its edges. Integrating the Connector into the urban fabric of downtown while still maintaining its ability to provide access through and to downtown is a key issue addressed by the guidelines and action steps below.

Development Objectives

East of 11th Street, the West Connector will become a focal point for hotels, convention and conference facilities, tourism-related uses, destination-oriented retail, restaurants and entertainment as well as office uses. West of 11th Street, how properties develop will depend on whether the convention center expansion occurs on

¹ The Westside Downtown Urban Renewal District is located more or less between 10th and 16th streets and Washington and Grove streets.

Parcel B. If not, this parcel would most likely be developed in office and hotel uses related to the CBD or other destination-type uses drawn by excellent visibility from the Connector. West of 13th Street, the likely focus will be service businesses with the possibility of residential uses along the south side of Grove Street as part of a new in-town neighborhood in Westside. The West Connector could also include a design center or cluster of creative-oriented businesses in the blocks north of Front Street and west of 10th Street. Improvements will be made to the Connector to create an appealing pedestrian environment along its edges, to create better connectivity among the CBD, the Westside Downtown district and the River Street Neighborhood and to moderate driving speeds. The Pioneer Walk will become a boulevard-style pedestrian link from the Boise River Greenbelt to the Grove Plaza through the West Connector subdistrict using 11th, Broad and 8th streets. This subdistrict, with its large vacant parcels close to the CBD and the Connector, offers several logical locations for a convention center expansion including Parcels B and C-D.

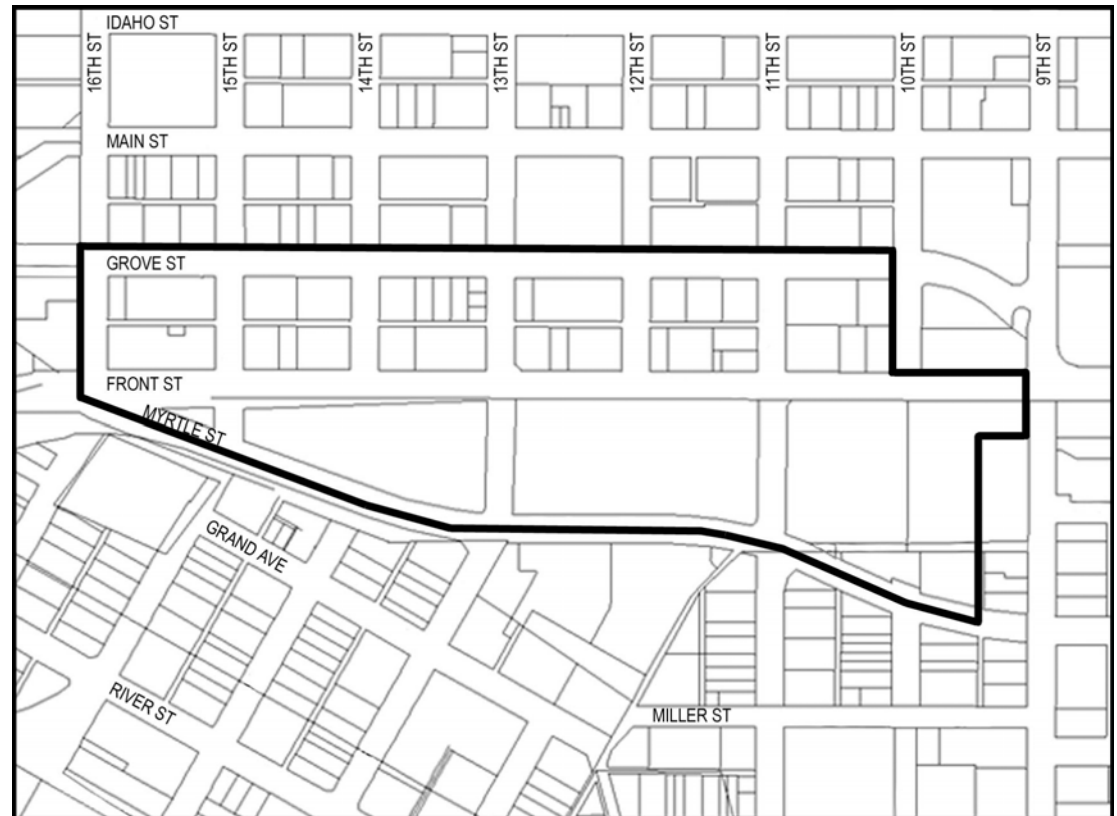
Design & Development Guidelines:

Land Use & Built Form

WC-1 Utilize the Preferred Development Concept in Figure 5 to guide development patterns in the West Connector subdistrict, and in making decisions on public investments.

WC-2 Use the Built Form map in Figure 7 to guide building heights and development densities in the West Connector subdistrict. Achieve a building height and density of development that makes an appropriate transition from the CBD to the West Connector.

Figure 11A: West Connector (Former Rail Yards)



WC-3 Allow expansion of downtown commercial uses into the West Connector subdistrict in a manner that contributes to the synergy between the West Connector subdistrict, the CBD and the Warehouse/Cultural District.

WC-4 Encourage tourism-related and destination-type retail, restaurant and entertainment businesses to cluster in the West Connector subdistrict, especially between 9th and 11th streets. Promote an urban intensity of at least 2.0 FAR in this area.

WC-5 Strategically place tourism-related uses so they are within comfortable walking distance of each other and hotels, public parking and transit, and design connections so they are clearly marked, attractive and safe.

WC-6 Explore the possibility of creating a design center or cluster of creative businesses between 10th, 13th, Front and Grove streets.

WC-7 Encourage service businesses to locate in the West Connector subdistrict west of 13th Street especially along Front Street.

WC-8 Examine the south side of Grove Street as a possible location for residential uses, which would then become the southern edge of the in-town neighborhood envisioned for the Westside Downtown district.

WC-9 Identify appropriate sites in the West Connector subdistrict for expansion of the convention center when it is ready to proceed.

WC-10 Discourage the construction of megastructures that fill entire superblocks unless this building type is absolutely essential to a particular use. Use building designs that break down megastructures into a series of building masses that are more human-scaled and less monumental.

Street Character & Connections

WC-11 Apply the Streetscaping Standards in the 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Plan to streets in the West Connector subdistrict.

WC-12 Apply the Design & Development Guidelines related to the Connector stated in Chapter 6, Street Character, Civic Spaces & Pedestrian Ways and Transportation & Parking.

WC-13 Re-establish the traditional street grid between Front and Myrtle by reconstructing 10th, and Broad streets. If a street connection is not possible, establish pedestrian connections as an alternative.

Pedestrian/Bicycle/Transit Connections

WC-14 Establish strong pedestrian, bicycle and transit connections between the West Connector subdistrict, the CBD and other subdistricts in downtown.

WC-15 Recognize 10th, 11th, 13th and Broad streets as primary pedestrian and bicycling streets.

WC-16 Use 11th and Broad streets to extend the Pioneer Walkway from its current terminus at 11th and Myrtle through the West Connector subdistrict to the Warehouse/Cultural District, The Grove plaza and CBD.

Parking

WC-17 Apply the Design & Development Guidelines related to parking stated in Chapter 6, Transportation & Parking.

Action Steps:

Urban Design, Land Use & Zoning

- Work with property owners to prepare a specific plan for the superblocs between Front and Myrtle and 9th and 15th streets. Include GBAD and the developer of the BoDo retail center at 8th and Broad. Assure the mix of uses, building placement, orientation and massing, and connections between uses promote synergy and an appealing pedestrian environment.
- Use a design charrette or similar process to identify a suitable site for the convention center expansion for use when it is ready to proceed. Place the convention center expansion where it will maximize support of the CBD, other downtown retail centers, hotels, restaurants and tourism-related businesses. Consider Parcels B and C-D as possible locations to be evaluated through this design process.
- Propose rezoning for Parcel A (between Front and Myrtle west of 13th Street) from C-2 to a zoning category that assures development will have an urban rather than suburban or auto-oriented character for consideration by city council.

- Propose rezoning for the parcels fronting on Grove between 13th and 16th from C-2 to a zoning category that better supports plan goals for housing if this area is to become part of the Westside neighborhood.

Street Character & Connections

- Implement the streetscaping standards in the 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Plan when street improvements are required as part of a development project or whenever improvements are made to streets in the West Connector subdistrict.
- Implement the Action Steps related to the Connector stated in Chapter 6, Street Character, Civic Spaces & Pedestrian Ways and Transportation & Parking.
- Work with property owners to re-establish 10th Street between Front and Myrtle and to install traffic signals at the Front/10th and Myrtle/10th intersections. If a street connection is not possible, establish a pedestrian connection on the 12th Street alignment.
- Work with property owners to re-establish Broad Street from 9th Street to 11th Street, and install pedestrian signals at the 9th/Broad and 11th/Broad intersections.

Pedestrian/Bicycle/Transit Connections

- Construct the Pioneer Walkway as a grand, boulevard-style pedestrian and bicycle link from the Boise River Greenbelt through the West Connector subdistrict on 11th and Broad streets to the Warehouse/Cultural District..
- Install streetscaping improvements on Broad Street that identify it as both an extension of the Pioneer Walkway and a primary pedestrian street. Design this street to encourage both walking and bicycling.
- Implement the downtown circulator to include a route along 9th Street that will link the West Connector subdistrict to the CBD and the other subdistricts in downtown.
- Evaluate Parcel A as a possible location for a multi-modal center that would serve as a connection point between the regional transit system and the downtown circulator.

Parking

- Build public parking garages to serve the west and east ends of this subdistrict, if needed to support intensive tourism-related businesses, and expand the P-1 parking district to cover the service area of these garages.
- Implement the Action Steps related to parking stated in Chapter 6, Transportation & Parking.

Economic Development

- Work with the Greater Boise Auditorium District (GBAD), Boise Convention and Visitors Bureau, Downtown Boise Association and area hotels to provide maps and information to visitors about the various subdistricts in downtown, sightseeing opportunities, and how to find shopping, dining and entertainment.

River Street Neighborhood

Existing Conditions

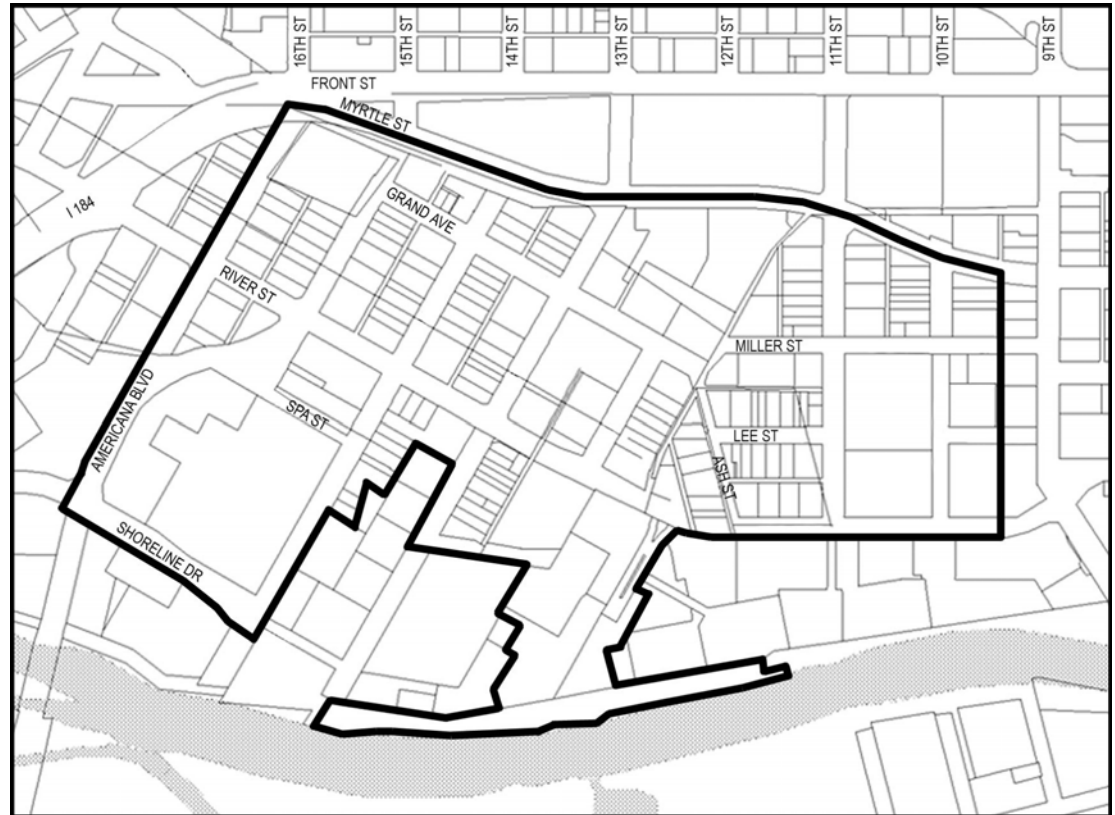
Much of the River Street Neighborhood subdistrict consists of a historic, turn-of-the-century residential neighborhood. It is bounded by 16th Street and Americana Boulevard on the west, Myrtle Street on the north, approximately 10th Street on the east and the Boise River on the south. It currently lacks a cohesive, neighborhood image, however, as the original single-family housing stock has deteriorated and in some cases been torn down, land has been cleared and redeveloped with a scattering of fourplexes, garden-style and mid-rise apartment buildings and offices or has become parking lots or left vacant. The neighborhood is without a focal point or neighborhood shopping district. This area is bordered by warehouses with trucking and distribution uses to the east, a suburban-style office park—Forest River—on the south, a 25-35 year old auto-oriented commercial strip along Americana Boulevard on the west and the Connector on the north. Most of the single-family houses are rentals, with some landowners owning multiple properties, and many of these houses show signs of needing maintenance. They provide, however, a significant reservoir of affordable housing close to the central business district.

There is a concentration of facilities and programs in this subdistrict that address the needs of lower income households including the city's homeless shelter and soup kitchen, Head Start and several apartment developments that provide affordable housing units.

The River Street Neighborhood is in a very strategic location, given it is situated close to the recreational amenities of the Boise River Greenbelt and Ann Morrison Park but it is also within walking distance or a short bicycle ride to the Cultural District, Julia Davis Park and the CBD. It has excellent vehicular access to the Connector, River Street, Americana, 16th, 15th, 13th, 11th and 9th streets and Capitol Boulevard. Because of its size and its location south of both Front and Myrtle, which places it outside the immediate influence of the central business district, this subdistrict tends to be quieter and more conducive to re-establishing a residential neighborhood than in the subdistricts along the Connector. The River Street Neighborhood also has large tracts of vacant or underutilized land, which increase the potential for revitalization and transformation of this area.

A number of office developments have occurred in this subdistrict, exclusively on properties fronting either Myrtle or River streets, showing the importance placed on automobile access and visibility for this type of use. These include the Pioneer Plaza office buildings between 11th and 13th on Myrtle, medical office buildings between 9th and 11th streets, the Orthopedic Surgery Center at 14th and River, River Plaza office building at 13th and River, and the Forest River office park on the south side of River Street between 9th and 12th streets. The Family Fitness Center on River Street has been converted to a multipurpose facility occupied by the Anser Charter School, Bronco Elite Gymnastics and a dance academy.

Figure 11B: River Street Neighborhood



In 2001, CCDC conducted a design competition focused on the existing Pioneer Walkway and the properties surrounding it to identify ways to enhance this walkway so it becomes a prominent link between the Boise River Greenbelt, the River Street Neighborhood, the West Connector subdistrict and the CBD as well as a catalyst for development along its edges. The winning design envisions a grand, boulevard-style pedestrian and bicycle link along its current alignment from the Boise River to 11th Street where it would continue east on Broad Street (re-established through Parcels C-D) to 8th Street and then north to the Grove Plaza.

Desired Character

The Downtown Boise Plan (1993) identified this area as a prime location for additional residential development, which has been reinforced by a change in the zoning for the area to Residential-Office (R-O). The River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Design Plan (1994) includes as a guideline to re-establish a critical mass of residential uses at the core of the River Street Neighborhood. This 2004 River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan places even greater emphasis on this idea, urging the development of a new in-town urban neighborhood with a range of housing choices. Most of the new housing is envisioned to be at a relatively high density and have a compact, urban form, in contrast to the modest single-family residences and garden apartments there today. Some opportunities may exist for housing at lesser densities at the west end of the neighborhood.

The winning design for the Pioneer Corridor identified the intersection of Grand Avenue and Miller and Ash

streets as the logical location for a plaza or similar public space to create a neighborhood focal point and as an anchor for a neighborhood-shopping district along Grand Avenue similar to Hyde Park. This design also suggests a public space for the larger community where the Pioneer Walkway intersects with the Boise River Greenbelt. The Pioneer Walkway would become an anchor for residential, office, retail and restaurant development. These ideas have been incorporated into this River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan.

The western edge along 16th and Americana faces a major thoroughfare with high visibility to traffic and as such is more conducive to light industrial, service commercial and office uses than to residential uses. The parcels fronting on these streets would serve as a buffer to the neighborhood to the east. The property at 700 N. Americana and 1500 Shoreline would be an exception. Taken together, these two parcels are approximately nine acres in size and represent a significant redevelopment opportunity. This site is envisioned as the location of a major mixed-use development including housing and office and possibly civic, educational and retail uses as well.

The eastern edge is somewhat fluid as to the types of uses that will develop, with different possibilities for the blocks between 9th and 11th streets. At present there are warehousing and storage businesses facing River Street. The parcel between 10th and 11th streets prevents Lee Street from continuing through to 9th Street. There are various uses including a high-tech firm, parking lot, dance club and medical offices facing 9th Street. The angle

of the Connector shortens the blocks on the south side of Myrtle between 9th and 11th streets. Most of the block between 10th and 11th south of Myrtle is vacant. This plan anticipates that office and commercial uses will continue to face 9th Street, but eventually the warehouse and storage businesses will relocate to less expensive ground west of the River–Myrtle planning area perhaps along Main or Fairview because the cost of using prime downtown real estate for such uses will become prohibitive. If these businesses relocate, the most likely scenario is that they will be replaced by offices or mixed-use development and the residential portion of the subdistrict would begin at 11th Street. It is possible that residential uses will extend eastward, in the half blocks facing Miller between 11th and 10th streets.

Office uses are expected to predominate along Myrtle Street to provide a buffer between the residential neighborhood and the Connector. If convention facilities are built in the West Connector subdistrict, it is possible that developers will seek out sites on the south side of Myrtle for hotel, restaurant and retail development. This plan discourages these uses from locating south of Myrtle and encourages them to locate between Front and Myrtle or north of Front to keep visitors in close proximity to both the CBD, the Old Boise Historic District, the Basque Block and the BoDo retail center at 8th and Broad streets. The primary reason for this approach is to prevent a drain on the vitality of the CBD. As noted above, office uses are also expected to occur along River Street, particularly between 9th and 11th streets, where they would face the Forest River office development.

Development Objectives

The central area of the River Street Neighborhood will become a thriving in-town, urban neighborhood with tree-lined streets and a wide variety of medium- to high-density housing anchored by a neighborhood commercial district along Grand Avenue and a public plaza at the intersection of Grand Avenue, Ash and Miller streets. It will have a sense of identity discernible by the residents and visitors. The Pioneer Walkway will be improved into a boulevard-style walking and bicycling route between the Boise River and downtown through this neighborhood, offering an refreshing and enjoyable park-like, public space that will also serve as a catalyst for development. The River Street Neighborhood will provide a place for people to live, shop, dine and socialize close to work places and cultural and entertainment attractions in downtown Boise. It will be possible to travel between these activity areas by walking and bicycling on people-friendly streets and by transit.

Office, service commercial and light industrial uses would continue along the western edge of this subdistrict facing 16th Street and Americana Boulevard, except that a major mixed-use development would develop on the northeast corner of Americana and Shoreline. Office and mixed-use development would occur on the east end of the district between 9th and 11th streets and along the south side of Myrtle Street. Hotel, retail, restaurant and tourism uses associated with the possible development of the convention center expansion would be encouraged north of the River Street Neighborhood along the West Connector or in the CBD, rather than allowing it to move into the River Street Neighborhood, so the vitality of the downtown core is reinforced.

Design & Development Guidelines

Land Use & Built Form

- RS-1 Utilize the Preferred Development Concept in Figure 5 to guide development patterns in the River Street Neighborhood subdistrict, and in making decisions on public investments.
- RS-2 Use the Built Form map in Figure 7 to guide building heights and development densities in the River Street Neighborhood.
- RS-3 Establish a flourishing in-town, urban neighborhood with a wide range of housing choices in the River Street Neighborhood including both renter and owner units in different sizes and configurations and at different rent and price levels.
- RS-4 Establish a distinctive identity for the residential portion of the River Street Neighborhood through gateways, public spaces, streetscaping, signage and other means.
- RS-5 Encourage housing densities of 50 to 120 units per acre in order to create an urban level of intensity and to maximize the number of housing units developed in the River Street Neighborhood.
- RS-6 Focus high- intensity housing and office uses along the Pioneer Walkway south of River Street and add restaurants and retail to the mix surrounding the civic space where the walkway intersects the Boise River Greenbelt.

RS-7 Focus medium- to medium-high-intensity housing development along the Pioneer Walkway north of River Street and add restaurants, retail and neighborhood-serving businesses surrounding the plaza space at the intersection of Grand Avenue and Miller and Ash streets.

RS-8 Create a neighborhood shopping district along Grand Avenue from Ash to 13th Street, and including the intersection of Grand Avenue, Miller and Ash streets.

RS-9 Prevent hotel and tourism-type uses associated with the possible development of the convention center expansion from developing south of Myrtle Street.

Historic Resources

- RS-10 Assess the historic value of the existing houses in the River Street Neighborhood.
- RS-11 Evaluate the possibility of creating a historic park within the River–Myrtle planning area, preferably in the River Street Neighborhood where a collection of the best examples of historic residences could be relocated, renovated and preserved.

Pioneer Corridor & Other Civic Spaces

RS-12 Use the Pioneer Walkway as an urban design element that provides structure to the River Street neighborhood, creates a public gathering place and linear park and serves as a catalyst for development along its edges.

RS-13 Establish a civic space at the intersection of 11th and Myrtle which celebrates this location as a gateway to downtown and a node on the Pioneer Walkway.

RS-14 Establish a neighborhood focal point using a plaza or similar civic space at the intersection of Grand Avenue and Miller and Ash streets.

RS-15 Establish a community-sized civic space at the intersection of the Pioneer Walkway and the Boise River Greenbelt. Encourage the development of activating uses such as restaurants in and along the edges of this public space.

Street Character & Connections

RS-16 Apply the Streetscaping Standards in the 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Plan to streets in the River Street Neighborhood subdistrict.

RS-17 Apply the Design & Development Guidelines related to the Connector stated in Chapter 6, Street Character, Civic Spaces & Pedestrian Ways and Transportation & Parking.

Pedestrian/Bicycle/Transit Connections

RS-18 Establish strong pedestrian, bicycle and transit connections between the River Street Neighborhood, the CBD and other subdistricts in downtown.

RS-19 Improve Grand Avenue and Miller Street so they become part of a network of people-oriented, slow streets that carry local neighborhood traffic and serve as safe and attractive routes for walking and bicycling. Encourage the use of alternative transportation modes through improving these streets.

Parking

RS-20 Apply the Design & Development Guidelines related to parking stated in Chapter 6, Transportation & Parking.

Action Steps

Urban Design, Land Use & Zoning

- Use the Pioneer Walk as a focal point for housing, office and destination retail, restaurants and entertainment uses, with the objective of creating a critical mass of residents, workers and visitors to activate the corridor and support other land uses in the River–Myrtle planning area.
- Create marketing materials on the Pioneer Walkway geared toward developers and property owners to interest them in building projects along its edges consistent with the Pioneer Corridor design.
- Acquire land at strategic locations along the Pioneer Walkway to help stimulate catalyst projects through public-private partnerships.
- Acquire land suitable for housing development, enter into development partnerships and write down land prices when necessary to stimulate the supply of housing in the River Street Neighborhood.
- Work with Neighborhood Housing Services to access resources that can be used to develop affordable housing options in River Street.

- Conduct information sessions with property owners about plans for the River Street Neighborhood and prospects for urban housing to encourage them to choose to develop housing on their properties.
- Exclude hotel and tourism-type uses from zoning districts in place south of Myrtle Street.

Civic Spaces

- If feasible, implement the design for the Pioneer Walkway by realigning and vacating portions of Ash Street and acquiring sufficient width to construct the walkway through acquisition, easements, licenses or dedications from property owners and Boise City.
- Construct the Pioneer Walkway as a grand, boulevard-style pedestrian link from the Boise River Greenbelt through the River Street neighborhood to 11th and Myrtle. (See the West Connector subdistrict and the Warehouse/Cultural District for an action steps regarding continuing the Pioneer Walkway on Broad to the Warehouse/Cultural District and on 8th Street to the Grove Plaza and the CBD.)
- Work with property owners and Boise City Parks & Recreation to design and build a community-oriented civic space at the intersection of the Pioneer Corridor and the Boise River Greenbelt. Include this improvement in the capital investment plan for 2006-2010.

- Work with property owners, Boise City and ACHD to design and implement a neighborhood-oriented civic space at the intersection of Ash, Miller and Grand Avenues. Include this improvement in the capital investment plan for 2006-2010.
- Initiate the design process for a plaza-like space at the intersection of 11th & Myrtle and construct this improvement in 2005-2006.
- Create gateways into the residential area of the River Street Neighborhood that give it identity and a desirable sense of place. Locations to consider for gateways include 15th/River, 15th/Grand, 13th/Myrtle, 11th/Myrtle, 9th/Miller and 9th/River or 11th/River depending on what happens in the blocks between 9th and 11th.

Street Character & Connections

- Implement the Streetscaping Standards in the 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Plan when street improvements are required as part of a development project or whenever improvements are made to streets in the River Street Neighborhood.
- Implement the action steps related to the Connector stated in Chapter 6, Street Character, Civic Spaces & Pedestrian Ways and Transportation & Parking.

Pedestrian/Bicycle/Transit Connections

- Install streetscaping improvements on Grand Avenue and Miller Street that identify them as primary pedestrian streets and encourage the use of these streets for walking and bicycling.

-
- Implement the downtown circulator to include a route along 9th Street that will link the River Street Neighborhood subdistrict to the CBD and the other subdistricts in downtown.

Parking

- Construct at least one public parking garage in the vicinity of the Pioneer Walkway to serve the River Street Neighborhood and visitors. Expand the P-1 parking district to include the service area for this garage.
- Implement the Action Steps for parking stated in Chapter 6, Transportation & Parking.

Economic Development

- Use the Pioneer Walkway as a draw to bring visitors downtown.

Warehouse/Cultural District

Existing Conditions

Boise's historic warehouse district developed with the coming of the railroad to downtown Boise in the 1890s. A large portion of this warehouse district is located in the center of the River–Myrtle planning area and has been identified as the Warehouse/Cultural District

subdistrict in this plan. It extends from Front Street to the Boise River and from Capitol Boulevard to 9th Street. Turn-of-the-century brick buildings line 8th, 9th and other streets in the area. Boise City established a historic district in a portion of this area in 19__ (see Figure 6).

In the late 1970s, W.H. Moore Company began redeveloping the historic buildings in the blocks between Front, Capitol, Myrtle and 9th streets, creating a specialty retail, office and entertainment district known as the 8th Street Marketplace. It met with only limited success. In 2002, these properties were bought by Brix and Company, which is constructing an expanded destination-style retail and entertainment development known as BoDo using the historic buildings as a basis and adding 34,000 square feet of office, 80,000 square feet of retail and restaurant space, an 11-screen movie theater and a 168-room hotel. As part of this project, the developer is re-establishing Broad Street from Capitol Boulevard to 9th Street, which restores the traditional street grid at this location.

This subdistrict has also become known as the Boise Cultural District because of the high concentration of cultural and entertainment facilities that are located within its boundaries or in close proximity.¹ The most recent additions are the Fulton Street Theater that opened in 2000 and the Big Easy Concert House that opened the following year.

¹ Included within the subdistrict are the Big Easy Concert House; the Funny Bone comedy club; Knock 'Em Dead Dinner Theater; Esther Simplot Performing Arts Academy, which provides classes and office and rehearsal space for Opera Idaho, Boise Philharmonic Orchestra and Ballet Idaho; the Fulton Street Theater which is home to Boise Contemporary Theater and Balance Dance Company and leases office space to Idaho Shakespeare Festival and Idaho Theater for Youth; the Kulture Klatsch; the Anne Frank Memorial; World Sports Humanitarian Hall of Fame; Boise City Library and Log Cabin Literary Center. The Foothills School of Arts and Sciences, the Idaho Urban Research and Design Center and part of the Boise State University studio art program are co-located in a warehouse building at 8th and River streets. Julia Davis Park is located immediately east of Capitol Boulevard and contains an amazing collection of cultural venues including the Boise Art Museum, Idaho State Historical Museum, Idaho Black History Museum, Discovery Center of Idaho and Zoo Boise. Also across Capitol Boulevard is the Basque Block, where the Basque Museum and Cultural Center is located, and the Flicks Theater. The Egyptian Theater is located at Main Street and Capitol Boulevard.

Recently there has been strong interest in building housing in the vicinity of 8th and Fulton near the Boise City Library. A design workshop was held to explore how this area could become a pulse point of housing clustered at the lower end of the Cultural District that would lead to the establishment of an urban neighborhood.

Desired Character

Many positive changes have occurred in the Warehouse/Cultural District since 1994, and at the same time, the historic character has remained more or less intact. Historic buildings are being renovated and reused as part of new development projects. The plan supports these efforts and encourages them to continue, keeping in mind that there may be an occasional older building that is obsolete or beyond repair and needs to be removed. In these situations, the plan recommends that new infill buildings in areas dominated by historic buildings respect the current scale and massing of these buildings although the new buildings may have a variety of architectural designs. Elsewhere in the Warehouse/Cultural District more intensive development may be acceptable especially if it results in housing.

Adding destination-style retail and entertainment to this subdistrict will attract more people to downtown. More visitors will increase support for both existing and new retail businesses and restaurants, thus adding to the vitality and economic prosperity of downtown. It is likely that there will be spin-off benefits from this new activity center. The design of the project makes it conducive to street fairs, concerts and other events that add to the appeal of downtown. It is possible that additional retail will seek to locate in close proximity to the BoDo development, and this plan encourages

growth to the west onto Parcels C-D. As this activity center grows, it is essential that connections be created between the BoDo development and the CBD to promote synergy between them rather draining energy from the CBD.

The Warehouse/Cultural District is viewed as a prime location for the development of medium- to high-density housing as part of BoDo and in a compact, urban neighborhood in the vicinity of 8th and Fulton streets.

The plan supports creating a distinct identity for the Cultural District through not only concentrating cultural venues in this area but also holding a variety of cultural events and using it as the focal point for Fall for Boise, the city's annual month-long celebration of the arts in the fall. The goal is to breathe life into the concept of the Cultural District as a lively, happening place in the public's mind. The plan calls for adding a mid-sized theater to the cultural offerings in the Cultural District and to use signage and urban design features to communicate the existence of the district.

Development Objective

A vigorous cultural district will be established between 9th and Capitol and Front and the Boise River, and will also extend to include the museums and cultural attractions in Julia Davis Park, the Basque Block and the Egyptian and Flicks movie theaters. This area will have a distinct identity and will become known as a place where a wide variety of cultural and entertainment events happen. It will add to the quality of life in the region and stimulate an increase in both planned and spontaneous visits to downtown Boise.

The cultural district will be anchored on the north by a destination-retail and entertainment center at 8th and Broad, which will build on the historic character of the area and complement rather than compete with the central business district. Strong connections that encourage pedestrians to travel between the Cultural District and the CBD will be established using transit, streetscaping, wayfinding, public art and other features. The retail and entertainment center will serve as a regional draw to bring people to downtown Boise, and will enhance the desirability of downtown as a place to live, work and shop. It will serve as a catalyst for additional retail, restaurant and entertainment development.

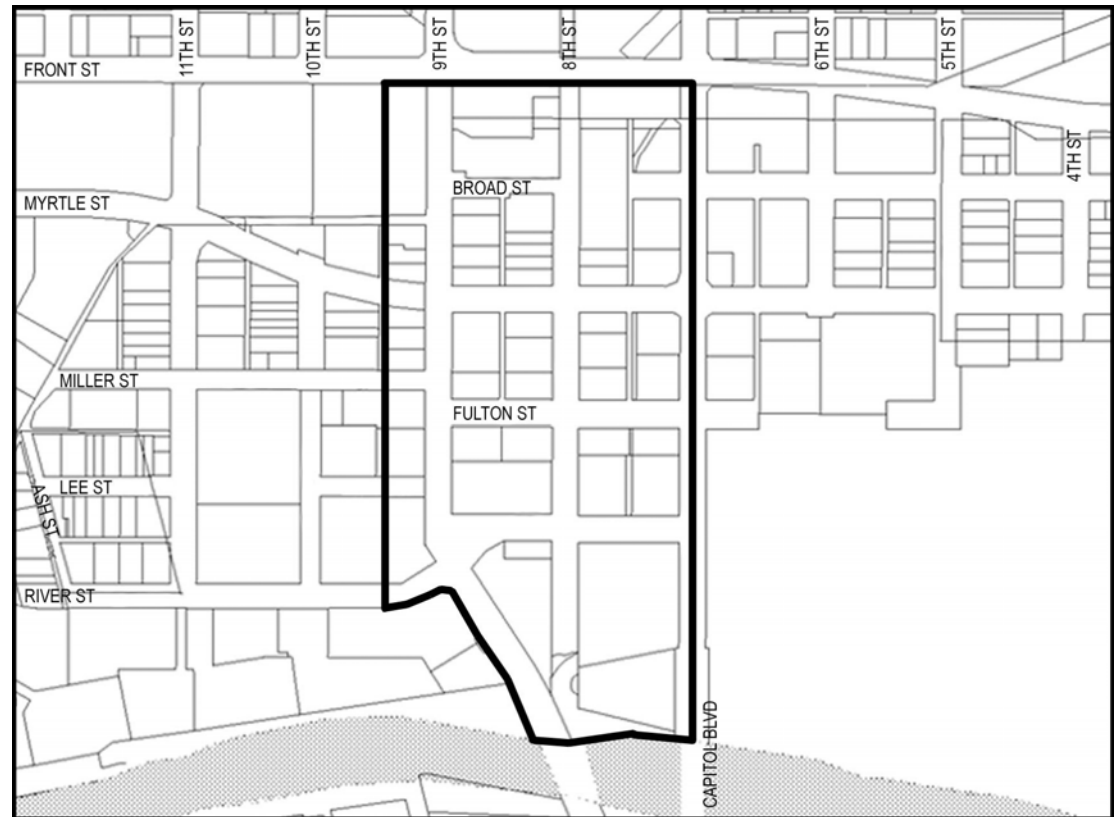
The cultural district will be anchored on the south by a compact, urban neighborhood. This neighborhood would be marked by entry treatments on 8th Street at River and Myrtle streets and on Fulton Street at 9th Street and Capitol Boulevard as well as distinctive streetscaping that would create a sense of place.

Design & Development Guidelines

Land Use & Built Form

- CD-1 Utilize the Preferred Development Concept in Figure 5 to guide development patterns in the Warehouse/Cultural District, and in making decisions on public investments.
- CD-2 Use the Built Form map in Figure 7 to guide building heights and development densities in the Warehouse/Cultural District.
- CD-3 Establish a vigorous destination-type retail and entertainment center at the north end of the Warehouse/Cultural District between Front and Myrtle, and 9th and Capitol.

Figure 11C: Warehouse/Cultural District



CD-4 Encourage spin-off retail uses to occur on the superblock between 9th and 11th and Front and Myrtle streets in the West Connector subdistrict.

CD-5 Work to create a compact, urban neighborhood in the area bounded by Capitol Boulevard and River, 9th and Myrtle streets. Make public investments to create a sense of place.

CD-6 Encourage housing densities of 80 to 120 units per acre in order to create an urban level of intensity and to maximize the number of housing units developed in the Warehouse/Cultural District.

CD-7 Evaluate whether the conversion of existing warehouse buildings to housing will make more affordable housing options available. Where feasible, encourage the renovation of warehouses into unique types of housing units such as lofts or artists' housing.

Historic Character & Resources

CD-8 Preserve the historic character of the Warehouse/Cultural District while encouraging development of underutilized property.

CD-9 Retain and build upon the historic flavor of the Warehouse/Cultural District. Facilitate the renovation and reuse of historic buildings whenever feasible.

CD-10 Where a historic structure is in poor repair or obsolete, evaluate alternative approaches that would include reuse of the structure, reuse of the façade or replacement. Weigh the contribution made by the

structure to the historic fabric of the Warehouse/Cultural District and to the community's record of its history with the benefits derived from redevelopment proposals. Give weight to proposals that will result in increasing the supply of housing in the Warehouse/Cultural District.

CD-11 Encourage a range of architectural styles in new buildings in a way that does not detract from the historic character of the Warehouse/Cultural District.

CD-12 Design new infill buildings in areas dominated by historic buildings so they respect the current scale and massing of these buildings although the new building may have a variety of architectural designs.

Cultural District Development

CD-13 Encourage the growth of performing arts and other cultural uses in the Warehouse/Cultural District with emphasis on the area south of Myrtle Street.

CD-14 Evaluate the need for new cultural facilities and the desirability of siting them in the Cultural District. Advocate for retaining the Cultural District as a focal point for cultural facilities.

CD-15 Continue the installation of signage and design elements to strengthen the identity of the Cultural District.

CD-16 Make the Cultural District a significant draw for downtown visitors.

Street Character & Connections

CD-17 Apply the Streetscape Standards in the 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Plan to streets in the Warehouse/Cultural District.

CD-18 Apply the Design & Development Guidelines related to the Connector stated in Chapter 6, Street Character, Civic Spaces & Pedestrian Ways and Transportation & Parking.

CD-19 Apply the Design & Development Guidelines related to Capitol Boulevard stated in Chapter 6, Street Character, Civic Spaces & Pedestrian Ways.

Pedestrian/Bicycle/Transit Connections

CD-20 Because of its unique role as a cultural and retail hub for downtown and the region, establish strong pedestrian and transit connections to the region.

CD-21 Establish strong pedestrian, bicycle and transit connections between the Warehouse/Cultural District, the CBD and other subdistricts in downtown. Recognize 8th, Broad and Fulton streets as primary pedestrian and bicycling streets.

CD-22 Use Broad and 8th streets to extend the Pioneer Walkway from its current terminus at 11th and Myrtle through the West Connector and Warehouse/Cultural District to the Grove Plaza and CBD.

Parking

CD-24 Apply the Design & Development Guidelines related to parking stated in Chapter 6, Transportation & Parking.

Action Steps

Urban Design, Land Use & Zoning

- Form development partnerships and invest in public improvements to stimulate retail development in the north end of the Warehouse/Cultural District.
- Acquire land suitable for housing development, enter into development partnerships and write down land prices when necessary to stimulate housing development in south end of the Warehouse/Cultural District.
- Conduct information sessions with property owners about plans for the Warehouse/Cultural District and prospects for urban housing to encourage them to choose to develop housing on their properties.

Historic Resources

- Work with the Boise City Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) to create a method of evaluating redevelopment proposals affecting historic structures. Weigh the assets being gained, preserved and lost, and the degree to which redevelopment will achieve the desired character and preferred development concept stated in this plan.
- Consult with the HPC when redevelopment proposals involving historic structures are initiated to obtain early input on ways to meet preservation and redevelopment goals.

Cultural District Development

- Work with the Office of the Mayor, Boise City Arts Commission, arts patrons and the arts community to evaluate if a mid-sized theater (400-1200 seats) is needed and whether locating it in the Warehouse/Cultural District is appropriate. If appropriate, identify potential locations and funding sources and create an implementation plan that would lead to construction.
- Hold a variety of cultural events in the Cultural District and use it as the focal point for Fall for Boise, the city's annual month-long celebration of the arts, to breathe life into this concept.
- Include references to the Cultural District in marketing cultural and entertainment events occurring in this district. Use the Cultural District as a draw to bring visitors downtown.

Street Character & Connections

- Implement the Action Steps related to the Connector as stated in Chapter 6, Street Character, Civic Spaces & Pedestrian Ways and Transportation & Parking.
- Implement the Action Steps related to Capitol Boulevard as stated in Chapter 6, Street Character, Civic Spaces & Pedestrian Ways.
- Implement the Streetscaping Standards in the 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Plan when street improvements are required as part of a development project or whenever improvements are made to streets in the Warehouse/Cultural District.

- Install streetscaping improvements along Myrtle, Fulton and River streets to create a distinctive sense of place in the area planned to be an urban neighborhood. Design and construct distinctive gateway treatments at the entry points to this neighborhood.
- Install streetscaping improvements along 8th Street from Front to the Boise River consistent with its role as the primary pedestrian connection between the CBD and the Boise River. These improvements should be similar in character to the improvements on 8th Street between Main and Bannock.

Pedestrian/Bicycle/Transit Connections

- Construct the Pioneer Walkway as a grand, boulevard-style pedestrian link from the Boise Greenbelt through the Warehouse/Cultural District on Broad and 8th streets to The Grove Plaza and CBD. Install streetscaping improvements along Broad consistent with this objective.
- Implement the downtown circulator to include a route along Capitol Boulevard and 9th Street that will link the Warehouse/Cultural District to the CBD and other subdistricts in downtown. Create transit stops in the Cultural District.

Parking

- Implement the Action Steps related to parking stated in Chapter 6, Transportation & Parking.

- Construct a public parking garage to serve the destination retail center at the north end of Warehouse/Cultural District. Expand the P-1 parking district to include the service area for this garage.
- Consider construction of a public parking garage to serve the south end of the Warehouse/Cultural District if needed. Expand the P-1 parking district to include the service area for this garage if it is built.

East Connector/Parkside

Existing Conditions

The East Connector /Parkside subdistrict runs approximately from Capitol Boulevard to 2nd Street and from Front Street to the edge of Julia Davis Park. It includes parcels located between Front and Myrtle, which form the Broadway-Chinden Connector, and parcels south of Myrtle Street bordering the park. This area between the two sides of the connector is wider than it is west of 11th Street. Broad Street runs east-west between Front and Myrtle and serves as a people-oriented, slow street much more suitable for pedestrian and bicycle travel than the Connector.

Development of this area began with the establishment of an elegant residential neighborhood in the late 1890s and early 1900s. The land for Julia Davis Park was donated to Boise City in 1907, which resulted in the creation of an exceptional urban park along the neighborhood's south edge. The coming of the railroad to downtown Boise in 1894, however, meant tracks were

eventually extended along Front Street cutting this neighborhood off from the rest of downtown. Later warehouses were built along the tracks and the neighborhood began to slide. Houses built during the Depression were much more modest. Many of the houses have since become rentals and are in deteriorating condition.

The 1990s were marked by an influx of low-rise, suburban style office buildings, encouraged by a change in the zoning to Residential-Office in 199_. The neighborhood is now a mixture of older, single family houses, warehouses, offices and vacant land where buildings have been cleared.

The Connector exerts a strong influence on this area as it does in the West Connector subdistrict. It works against the development of housing along its edges because the current design and traffic speeds create a harsh environment. At the same time, the Parkside neighborhood has assets that make for a desirable residential neighborhood. These include close proximity to Julia Davis Park, Boise State University and a large-scale grocery store, several major employers within walking or bicycling distance, and close proximity to restaurants, shopping and cultural offerings in Old Boise and the downtown core. The plan recommends that steps be taken to encourage housing as part of the land use mix in this subdistrict even though the tendency of the market will be toward office.

Desired Character

The area east of 6th Street between Broad Street and the northern edge of Julia Davis Park will become a compact, urban residential neighborhood interspersed

with low- to medium-rise office buildings. Where possible, housing should face housing along Broad Street. Broad Street will become a delightful neighborhood street with neighborhood-oriented retail uses clustered on the west end close to Capitol Boulevard or in the center section around a neighborhood node on Broad Street between 3rd and 4th streets. Higher intensity office uses will line the Connector and Capitol Boulevard, with the possibility of ground floor retail on Capitol. The Connector is not expected to become a shopping street given its characteristics with high volumes of commute traffic. Fourth Street will be re-established as a through connection to Old Boise–Eastside. The entrance to Julia Davis Park at 3rd Street will become much more prominent and 3rd Street will become a strong pedestrian and bicycle link from the park to the Ada County Courthouse and then to Grove, Idaho and Main streets which will provide connections to the Old Boise commercial district and the downtown core.

Development Objectives

Create a balance between office, retail and residential uses in this subdistrict and prevent office development from overtaking the entire area. Focus office development along the Connector and Capitol Boulevard. Locate housing along Broad Street, to take advantage of this pedestrian-oriented street, and in the area between Broad and Myrtle streets because of its proximity to Julia Davis Park. Create a neighborhood node on Broad Street between 3rd and 4th streets, and pedestrian and bicycle connections on 3rd and 4th to Old Boise–Eastside and the downtown core. Encourage neighborhood-oriented retail uses to cluster at the neighborhood node and downtown-oriented retail uses to locate on Capitol Boulevard.

Design & Development Guidelines

Land Use & Built Form

EC-1 Utilize the Preferred Development Concept in [Figure 5](#) to guide development patterns in the East Connector/Parkside Neighborhood subdistrict, and in making decisions on public investments.

EC-2 Use the Built Form map in [Figure 7](#) to guide building heights and development densities in the East Connector/Parkside subdistrict.

EC-3 Work to create a compact, urban neighborhood in the area bounded by 6th, Broad, 3rd and Myrtle Streets. Encourage locating housing developments so they face each other across Broad Street or are oriented to Julia Davis Park.

EC-4 Encourage housing densities of 80 to 120 units per acre in order to create an urban level of intensity and to maximize the number of housing units developed in the East Connector/Parkside subdistrict.

EC-5 Focus office development along the Connector and Capitol Boulevard.

Historic Resources

EC-6 Assess the historic value of the existing houses in the Parkside Neighborhood.

EC-7 Evaluate the possibility of creating a historic park within the River–Myrtle planning area, preferably in the River Street Neighborhood where a collection of the best examples of historic residences could be relocated, renovated and preserved.

Civic Spaces

EC-8 Create a neighborhood node on Broad Street between 3rd and 4th streets similar to the Basque Block. Encourage neighborhood-oriented retail to cluster around this node.

Street Character & Connections

EC-9 Apply the Streetscape Standards in the 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Plan to streets in the East Connector/Parkside District.

EC-10 Apply the Design & Development Guidelines related to the Connector stated in Chapter 6, Street Character, Civic Spaces & Pedestrian Ways and Transportation & Parking.

EC-11 Apply the Design & Development Guidelines related to Capitol Boulevard stated in Chapter 6, Street Character, Civic Spaces & Pedestrian Ways.

Pedestrian/Bicycle/Transit Connections

EC-12 Establish strong pedestrian, bicycle and transit connections between the East Connector/Parkside subdistrict, the CBD and other subdistricts in downtown. Recognize 3rd and Broad Streets as primary pedestrian and bicycling streets.

EC-13 Create a more prominent entrance to Julia Davis Park at 3rd Street. Improve 3rd Street so it becomes a strong pedestrian and bicycle link from the park to the Ada County Courthouse and then to Grove, Idaho and Main streets, which provide connections to the Old Boise commercial district and the downtown core.

Figure 11D: East Connector/Parkside



Parking

EC-14 Apply the Design & Development Guidelines related to parking stated in Chapter 6, Transportation & Parking.

Action Steps

Urban Design, Land Use & Zoning

- Acquire land suitable for housing development, enter into development partnerships and write down land prices when necessary to stimulate housing development in the East Connector/Parkside subdistrict.
- Conduct information sessions with property owners about plans for the East Connector/Parkside subdistrict and prospects for urban housing to encourage them to choose to develop housing on their properties.

Civic Spaces

- Initiate the design process for a civic space on Broad Avenue between 3rd and 4th Streets and include this improvement in the five-year capital plan for 2006-2010.
- Work with Boise City Parks Department to make improvements to the 3rd Street entrance to Julia Davis Park.

Street Character & Connections

- Implement the Action Steps related to the Connector as stated in Chapter 6, Street Character, Civic Spaces & Pedestrian Ways and Transportation & Parking.
- Implement the Action Steps related to Capitol Boulevard as stated in Chapter 6, Street Character, Civic Spaces & Pedestrian Ways.
- Implement the streetscaping standards in the 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Plan when street improvements are required as part of a development project or whenever improvements are made to streets in the East Connector/Parkside subdistrict.
- Install streetscaping improvements on 3rd Street and Broad Streets that identify them as primary pedestrian streets and encourage the use of these streets for walking and bicycling.

Pedestrian/Bicycle/Transit Connections

- Implement the downtown circulator to include a route along Capitol Boulevard that will link the East Connector/Parkside subdistrict to the CBD, Old Boise Eastside and the Warehouse/Cultural District.

Parking

- Implement the Action Steps related to parking as stated in Chapter 6, Transportation & Parking.

Courthouse Corridor

Existing Conditions

The Courthouse Corridor is bounded on the north side by property owned by Ada County, Broadway Avenue on the east, Julia Davis Park on the south and 3rd and 2nd streets on the west.

Development of the Ada County property is the most substantial event to happen to the River–Myrtle District since 1994. In 1994, this property was vacant except for a warehouse building at the east end—a vestige of the railroad era. Construction of the 322,825 square foot Ada County Courthouse and 424-space Courthouse parking garage was completed in January 2002. It was followed by complete excavation of the parcels between Avenue B and Broadway to construct a one-level underground parking garage with 381 spaces, development of 399 affordable housing units and retail space on Parcels 2 and 3 (referred to as PA2 and PA3), and construction of the 207,300 square foot Idaho Water Center, which provides office and lab space for the University of Idaho, Idaho Department of Water Resources and US Forest Service. CCDC made a significant investment in creating a pedestrian promenade that runs east-west between the Courthouse Corridor and the Idaho Water Center and along the front face of the Civic Plaza Apartments. It has been furnished with brick paving, planters and seating which create a high quality public space. The sidewalks along Front Street have also been upgraded with brick paving and lined with trees to provide a more protected pedestrian environment.

The developments in the Courthouse Corridor have raised the level of intensity at the east end of the River–Myrtle planning area and created more ambitious expectations as to what will happen in the future. The scale of the Ada County Courthouse, Civic Plaza Apartments, Idaho Water Center and the Kreizenbeck office building sends a clear message that downtown is moving outward and that the intersection at Broadway and Front has become a gateway to downtown.

The current mix of uses includes larger-scale office buildings, a warehouse-style grocery store, the Civic Plaza Apartments and ground-floor retail space in the courthouse and Kreizenbeck building. More retail space has been built as part of the Civic Plaza Apartments project but there have been difficulties leasing it. The original development program for the Ada County-owned property envisioned an additional 800,000 square feet. In April 2004, CCDC, Ada County, University of Idaho and Civic Partners conducted a mid-course review of the project, which resulted in a number of suggestions for completion of the development. These included:

- Addressing the challenges created by the Connector for adjacent development and the need to tame these streets if development is to be successful.
- Recognizing the difficulties facing retail uses and the need to broaden the mix of tenants sought for the retail space.
- Adding more residential to create a stronger sense of community for the existing Civic Plaza apartments.

- Adding a hotel or educational uses to the mix.
- Retaining open space on the parcel in front of PA3, and clustering development on either end to create a sense of place.
- Softening the current institutional look to the Corridor as new buildings are added.

These recommendations have been incorporated into the development guidelines for the Courthouse Corridor subdistrict where applicable.

The Winco grocery store is located on a site equivalent to four city blocks with approximately 1/3 of the site occupied by the building and 2/3 occupied by the parking lot. It departs from the urban character that this plan encourages; however, it is a significant asset in the effort to increase the amount of housing in downtown.

There is a significant opportunity site on the southwest corner of Broadway and Front. The University of Idaho Foundation purchased the property to build Idaho Place—where University of Idaho, Boise State University and Idaho State University had hoped to create an educational center serving the State of Idaho and beyond. This project is on hold at the present time, which creates uncertainty about what might occur on this property. The River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan envisions a significant mixed-use project at this location.

Moving the Ada County Courthouse from the CBD to its current location on Front Street between 1st and 3rd streets has changed traffic patterns; the degree to which the County work force uses the downtown core for shopping and dining at lunch time; and the downtown office market as legal and other related office tenants move to be closer to the Courthouse. Retaining the Ada

County Courthouse in downtown was an important objective of the original River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Design Plan, which has been met with the completion of the new courthouse.

Challenges remain in linking the Courthouse Corridor to the CBD and to other activity centers in downtown. The Downtown Boise Mobility Study is recommending that a downtown circulator be put in place that would have two loops, one of which would run on Main and Idaho and connect to the Courthouse Corridor.

Desired Character

The Courthouse Corridor will continue to be a focal point for larger-scale development because of its location on Front and Myrtle streets and Broadway Avenue—all of which are high volume thoroughfares. Much of the recent development is government-related or private offices. As new development occurs, it should include a broader mix of uses—more housing, retail, hotels and educational facilities. Otherwise there is a possibility that the corridor will be lifeless after hours and on weekends. Creating a mix of uses will also make better use of the abundant parking facilities now in place along the north side of the corridor.

Care should be exercised in how these larger-scale buildings are designed to avoid them becoming too monumental, too far from human scale and too disconnected with the street level. The visual impact of the existing Civic Plaza buildings on the north side of Front Street needs to be softened. The vacant land situated between these buildings and Front Street offers the opportunity to create a public space around which additional buildings could be clustered—buildings with more varied massing and more street-level presence. A

public open space would also provide a gathering place for people and serve as the living room to the apartments already in place.

Adding housing to the Ada County property and to the Courthouse Corridor in general will benefit the existing apartments by creating a stronger sense of neighborhood in the area.

The property on Broadway Avenue between Front and Myrtle represents one of the most significant development opportunities between Portland and Salt Lake City. It is most important that it not be underdeveloped. It is ideally suited for a major mixed-use development including residential, office, retail and a hotel at a scale to match or exceed the Idaho Water Center. Such development will help address the balance between different types of uses in the Courthouse Corridor. At the same time, the building form should be approachable and connected to the street level. It should not be self-contained and separated from the surrounding city.

The idea of creating a higher education center, with representation from the three major universities in the state still has merit given the growing population in the Treasure Valley and the importance of education to keeping Idaho competitive in the world economy. The Courthouse Corridor is a logical location for such facilities although the size and configuration may differ substantially from the original concept. Other possible locations are in the West Connector and East Connector/Parkside subdistricts, the CBD and the Westside Downtown district. If such a center is undertaken, it should be located so it becomes a part of the downtown community and not a separate campus-style facility.

Figure 11E: Courthouse Corridor



As noted earlier, the Broadway–Chinden Connector exerts a powerful influence on the types of development seeking to locate along its edges. It also affects the connectivity between the north side and the south side of downtown Boise and how comfortable people feel walking or bicycling on or across these roadways.

Development Objectives

Given that the Courthouse Corridor is a focal point for high intensity development, attention should be given to assuring that this development is well-designed, approachable and not overwhelming. New developments should incorporate elements that reduce the monumental effect of massive buildings and retain a human scale at the street level. Use of design techniques that make large-scale buildings appear to be a collection of smaller buildings will be encouraged. Incorporating open space in high intensity development to create a sense of place and stimulate more dynamic activity at the street level will also be encouraged.

New development should incorporate a mix of uses that encourages a 24-hour level of activity, and avoids the Courthouse Corridor becoming a collection of office buildings. Creation of a major mixed-use project on the west side of Broadway between Front and Myrtle is the most significant plan proposal related to increasing the mix of uses in the corridor. It is most important that the development potential of this site, and its prospects for contributing to the downtown and regional economy not be underestimated. An emphasis should also be placed on adding more housing to create a neighborhood for both new and existing residents. Additional

housing would also reinforce efforts to create an in-town neighborhood in the East Connector/Parkside subdistrict to the immediate west of the corridor.

Every effort should be made to moderate the impact of Front and Myrtle on adjacent properties by creating a more appealing pedestrian environment along their edges. This plan envisions the Connector transformed into a set of boulevard-style streets that continue to provide a high capacity vehicular route to, from and through downtown, but are also compatible with a downtown setting. More intense streetscaping will be used to create a buffer between the sidewalk and the roadway to encourage walking and bicycling and allow a wider range of uses to develop along its edges. Public spaces should also be placed at strategic locations along Front and Myrtle Streets to vary the visual width of the corridor as people travel through it and to create more visual interest and a stronger sense of place.

Connectivity for pedestrians and bicyclists should be improved by establishing a pedestrian connection on the Avenue A alignment from Front Street to Warm Springs Avenue and on the Broad Street alignment from 2nd Street to Avenue B, and by adding traffic signals at selected intersections on the Connector. The Courthouse Corridor should be better served by transit. Because the Courthouse Corridor is being developed at higher intensities, it will have a concentration of workers and residents. It is important to provide connections for these people to the retail districts in the CBD, Old Boise commercial district and the Warehouse/Cultural District.

Design & Development Guidelines

Land Use & Built Form

- CC-1 Utilize the Preferred Development Concept in Figure 5 to guide development patterns in the Courthouse Corridor subdistrict, and in making decisions on public investments.
- CC-2 Use the Built Form map in Figure 7 to guide building heights and development densities in the Courthouse Corridor subdistrict.
- CC-3 Encourage the development of a major, mixed-use project west of Broadway between Front and Myrtle, to include residential, office, retail and possibly a hotel at a scale to match the Idaho Water Center.
- CC-4 Broaden the mix of uses in the Courthouse Corridor subdistrict to include more housing, retail, hotels and educational facilities and reduce the concentration of office uses in order to add vitality to the area after hours and on weekends.
- CC-5 Add housing to the Courthouse Corridor subdistrict to create more of a neighborhood feeling for existing housing.
- CC-6 Encourage housing densities of 80 to 140 units per acre in order to create an urban level of intensity and to maximize the number of housing units developed in the Courthouse Corridor subdistrict.

- CC-7 Discourage the construction of mega-structures that fill entire super-blocks unless this building type is essential to a particular use. Use building designs that break down mega-structures into a series of building masses that are more human-scaled and less monumental, and appear to be a series of smaller buildings.

Civic Spaces

- CC-8 Work with developers to incorporate public spaces into private development projects and to use these spaces as a focal point in arranging buildings. Use these spaces to create a sense of place, create connections between buildings, enliven the street level and provide a counterpoint to high intensity development.

Street Character & Connections

- CC-9 Apply the Streetscape Standards in the 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Plan to streets in the Courthouse Corridor subdistrict.
- CC-10 Apply the Design & Development Guidelines related to the Connector stated in Chapter 6, Street Character, Civic Spaces & Pedestrian Ways and Transportation & Parking.
- CC-11 Work with property owners to improve the Broad Street alignment from 2nd Street to Broadway Avenue as a pedestrian promenade, which provides a walking and bicycling connection through their properties. Recommend this connection be incorporated into the design of new development projects when the Broad Street alignment crosses or abuts these projects. Reconstruct a street on the Broad Street alignment where feasible.

Pedestrian/Bicycle/Transit Connections

CC-12 Establish strong pedestrian and transit connections between the Courthouse Corridor subdistrict, the CBD and other subdistricts in downtown. Recognize 3rd, Avenue A and Avenue B as primary north-south pedestrian and bicycle connections.

Parking

CC-13 Apply the Design & Development Guidelines related to parking stated in Chapter 6, Transportation & Parking.

Actions Steps

Urban Design, Land Use & Zoning

- Work with Ada County, University of Idaho and Civic Partners to implement the recommendations from the Courthouse Corridor mid-course review. Refine the urban design plan for the remaining development to be built in the corridor.
- Work with the University of Idaho to conduct a market analysis of the development possibilities for the property on Broadway Avenue between Front and Myrtle streets. Conduct a design charette to develop scenarios for building massing and urban design elements. Give attention to creating a pedestrian connection through the property from Broadway to Avenue B along Broad Street alignment.

- Collect examples of large-scale buildings designed to appear as a series of smaller buildings, ways in which to keep large-scale buildings approachable and ways to retain a human scale at the street level regardless of the massiveness of the building. Include examples of developments that use open space as a way to arrange high-density development into attractive and welcoming places. Use these ideas in working with developers proposing projects in the Courthouse Corridor subdistrict.
- Develop an overall urban design scheme for the Courthouse Corridor subdistrict that shows how to coordinate site layout between developments so they create a series of places rather than stand-alone projects.
- Evaluate the R-O zoning district to determine if it remains appropriate for the Courthouse Corridor subdistrict given the intensity of development being built in this subdistrict. Consider rezoning this area to C-5 or a mixed-use zoning district created to better address the type and intensity of development occurring in the Courthouse Corridor subdistrict.

Civic Spaces

- Work with Ada County and the developer in the Courthouse Corridor subdistrict to create a public open space between the Civic Plaza Apartments and Front Street.

Street Character & Connections

- Implement the Action Steps related to the Connector as stated in Chapter 6, Street Character, Civic Spaces & Pedestrian Ways and Transportation & Parking.
- Implement the streetscaping standards in the 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Plan when street improvements are required as part of a development project or whenever improvements are made to streets in the Courthouse Corridor subdistrict.
- Work with property owners to re-establish Broad Street from 2nd Street to Avenue B. If a street connection is not possible, establish a pedestrian connection on the Broad Street alignment.

Pedestrian/Bicycle/Transit Connections

- Implement the downtown circulator to include a route through the Courthouse Corridor subdistrict that will link this subdistrict, the CBD and other subdistricts in downtown. Create transit stops to serve the Idaho Water Center and Ada County Courthouse as well as other destinations.

Parking

- Implement the Actions Steps related to parking stated in Chapter 6, Transportation & Parking.

Old Boise–Eastside

The subdistrict map in [Figure 11](#) shows two additional areas: a portion of the Central Business District and the Eastside Neighborhood. These two areas comprise the Old Boise–Eastside planning area.¹ The creation of the River Myrtle–Old Boise urban renewal district in 2004 added the Old Boise–Eastside study area to the original River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Renewal District, which has been renamed the River Myrtle–Old Boise Urban Renewal District. In addition the City Council approved master plans for this combined urban renewal district: one covering the River–Myrtle planning area and one covering the Old Boise–Eastside planning area. Please refer to the Old Boise–Eastside Master Plan for information about specific plans, guidelines and actions steps that pertain to these two subdistricts.

¹ The original River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Design Plan included a subdistrict called the Old Boise Expansion Area. This area was located between Capitol Boulevard and Grove, 3rd and Front streets. It is now included within the Old Boise–Eastside planning area and so is covered by the Old Boise–Eastside Master Plan.

8: Implementation



Construction of the Ada County Courthouse and Administrative Offices at Front and 2nd streets fulfilled an objective in the original River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Design Plan to maintain downtown Boise as the center of federal, state, county and city government institutions. It also served as a catalyst for additional development at urban intensities and expanded the commonly accepted boundaries for downtown Boise.

However good a plan may be, its benefits will not be realized until it has been implemented. Implementation occurs through many avenues including private and public investments, grant programs, the use of regulatory tools such as zoning and design review, construction of catalyst projects and other actions. Boise has experienced successful redevelopment in the Central District, where investments of public funds have precipitated a five-fold investment of private funds. Construction of the Grove Plaza, reconstruction of downtown streets and installation of brick sidewalks, street trees and planters, turning 8th Street into a pedestrian-oriented street where restaurants and shops thrive, creating the transit mall and building public parking garages have brought about a transformation of

Boise's downtown core. Entering into partnerships with private developers and using land write-downs has resulted in renovation and reuse of historic buildings and new development.

This success has continued in the River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Renewal District with development of the River Plaza Apartments and office building and construction of the Ada County Courthouse, Civic Plaza apartments and parking garages in the Courthouse Corridor.

The River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan sets forth objectives, design and development guidelines and action steps that describe how this area should develop over the next 20 years.

This plan will help guide public and private actions as development proceeds so that they complement each other and yield greater results than what otherwise would occur if no plan were in place. These results will not be achieved, however, without commitment, dedicated effort and investment from both the public and private sectors. This section of the plan describes what resources are available and what steps must be taken in order to implement the River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan.

Resources for Public Investment

Tax increment financing (TIF) is the primary means for funding public improvements in an urban renewal area. Idaho State Code allows for the establishment of urban renewal districts and the creation of revenue allocation areas to provide a source of TIF funding for urban renewal activities. When a revenues allocation area is created, a portion of the property taxes generated from increases in assessed valuation are allocated to the urban renewal agency. (See sidebar on p. 12 for more information on TIF.) These funds must be used in the urban renewal district for activities that are intended to redevelop and revitalize the area.

Other sources of funding for redevelopment activities include:

- Revenues from public parking and transit systems operated by the urban renewal agency
- Revenue bonds

- Improvement districts
- Federal and state funding programs for transportation and transit projects, housing, community development, business development and other funding programs
- Federal tax credit programs
- Grants and donations

River Street–Myrtle Street Financial Plan

The initial financial analysis for the Old Boise–Eastside study area showed that it might not generate sufficient tax increment revenue to pay for anticipated improvements. As a result, the CCDC Board of Commissioners evaluated combining the Old Boise–Eastside area with the existing River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Renewal District as part of this master planning process. The advantages of having a larger land area in an urban renewal district are discussed in Chapter 1.

At the conclusion of the master planning process for both the River–Myrtle planning area and the Old Boise–Eastside planning area, Keyser Marston Associates prepared a financial analysis for a combined River Myrtle–Old Boise Urban Renewal District and for Old Boise–Eastside as a stand-alone district. In both cases, the financial analysis projects that sufficient resources from tax increment revenue and other sources will be available to pay for the proposed improvements. In the intervening time between the preliminary and final analysis for Old Boise–Eastside, the assumptions regarding the

value of future development and the cost and extent of improvements were refined for this area and led to a positive result. (The financial analyses for the combined River Myrtle–Old Boise District and Old Boise–Eastside are available from CCDC.)

As noted in Chapter 1, during the public review of this plan, property owners in the existing River Street–Myrtle Street district expressed concerns that adding Old Boise–Eastside would drain resources from the River Street–Myrtle Street district and leave some areas of this district without resources. To address this concern, this plan includes CCDC’s commitment to work with a stakeholder committee to prepare a capital investment plans for each successive five years remaining in the life of the district. The stakeholder committee would include property owners, business owners and residents in the district. This committee would make recommendations to the CCDC Board of Commissioners on the type and timing of public investments in the various subdistricts of River Myrtle–Old Boise Urban Renewal District. These subdistricts are shown in Figure 11.

The CCDC Board of Commissioners recommended and the Boise City Council elected to proceed with a combined River Myrtle–Old Boise Urban Renewal

District because of the advantages of larger district described earlier.

This financial analysis includes the following:

- Assumptions about the amount, type and timing of development that would occur during the planning period. Development assumptions are used to estimate the amount of property tax revenue that would flow to CCDC from the revenue allocation area.
- Assumptions about the number and size of parking garages that would be built and estimates of revenue that would be generated.
- Estimates of other likely sources of funding.
- List of potential projects CCDC would undertake to revitalize both Old Boise/Eastside and River Street–Myrtle Street areas during the next 20 years. These projects are intended to be catalysts that will trigger private investment in the district.

The table below lists the type and estimated costs for proposed revitalization projects expected to be built in River–Myrtle during the 20-year planning horizon. It provides a description of the anticipated public investments in the River–Myrtle area.

Revitalization Projects & Costs

Parking Garages (4)	\$19,312,500
Transit Facilities/Downtown Circulator	\$20,400,000
Local	\$ 4,080,000
Federal	\$16,320,000
Pioneer Corridor	\$ 5,522,000
Streets	
Broad Street Extension	\$ 1,074,400
10 th Street Extension	\$ 638,000
Streetscaping/Sidewalks/Curb & Gutter	
Broad Street	\$ 867,680
10 th Street Extension	\$ 237,600
Capitol Boulevard	\$ 2,000,000
BoDo	\$ 1,100,000
Grove Street (6 th to 5 th)	\$ 420,000
Other Streetscape	\$ 3,937,500
Property Acquisition	\$ 1,800,000
Sewer/Storm Drainage	\$ 750,000
Water Quality Treatment	\$ 300,000
Utility Undergrounding	\$ 1,000,000
Telecommunications Facilities	\$ 800,000
Geothermal Capacity Increase	\$ 600,000
Traffic Signals	\$ 800,000
Road Re-surfacing	\$ 200,000
Julia Davis Park Expansion	\$ 480,000
Other Park/Open Space	\$ 200,000
Housing	\$ 600,000
Façade Easements/Improvements	\$ 100,000
Improve Vehicular/Pedestrian Access	\$ 300,000
Special Projects	\$ 400,000
Cultural Investments	\$ 169,438
Total	\$64,009,118

It should be noted that the financial plan does not guarantee that all of these improvements will be made. Over time, the amount of tax increment produced will depend on the development activity in the River Myrtle–Old Boise Urban Renewal District. The flow of revenues may be higher or lower than projected in the financial plan, which would lead to adjustments in the improvements undertaken. The amount of funding allocated to each type of improvement may be adjusted depending on opportunities that arise or needs that develop. The financial plan is a approximate picture of the types and amount of investment that will occur given what is now known, based on assumptions about the amount of development activity and its value, tax rates, financing, construction and operating costs and other factors.

River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan as Part of Boise City Comprehensive Plan

City decision makers use the Boise City Comprehensive Plan to evaluate development applications. The Boise City Zoning Ordinance states that approval for zoning revisions, land subdivisions, conditional uses and design review requires a finding that the proposal under consideration be consistent with the comprehensive plan. Existing urban renewal plans for the Central, River Street–Myrtle Street and Westside Downtown districts have been adopted by reference as part of the comprehensive plan, and thus are used in determining consistency when a development proposal is located in one of those districts. Initiating an amendment to the compre-

hensive plan to include the River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan update is one of the important next steps in implementing this plan, so it will also be used in making consistency findings.

Zoning Revisions

Zoning is one of the key tools for implementing any long-range plan for revitalization and development. The River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan establishes a vision and desired direction for this area, expressed through plans, objectives, design and development guidelines and action steps. The Boise City Zoning Ordinance actually regulates how property owners can use their property. Plan implementation is more effective when there is consistency between urban renewal plans and the zoning regulations.

Current zoning designations in River Street–Myrtle Street District are shown in Appendix B. A majority of the property in the district is in the C-5D, C-5HD and R-OD districts. A minor amount of land is in the C-2 and C-3 districts. The City of Boise has achieved some success in implementing the Downtown Boise Plan by establishing the Central Business (C-5) and the Residential Office (R-O) zoning classifications. Development has responded

as planned for the most part, although there have been some intrusions of suburban-style development along the Connector. Typically these developments place surface parking lots between the building and the street and densities are lower than desired.

This section discusses the current zoning districts in place in the River–Myrtle planning area that may need attention in order to create greater consistency between this plan and zoning regulations.

C-5 and R-O Districts

The C-5 district encourages urban density, pedestrian-oriented development while R-O is oriented toward a mix of lower intensity residential and office development.

For the most part, C-5 is in the center of the planning area between 11th and 5th streets. R-O fills the wings of the planning area extending east from 5th to Broadway and west from 11th to Americana. C-5 more or less coincides with the West Connector, Warehouse/Cultural District and part of the East Connector/Parkside subdistrict west of 5th Street and R-O with the River Street Neighborhood, East Connector/Parkside east of 5th Street, and Courthouse Corridor subdistricts.

One of the issues identified during the planning process was the effect of the R-O district on the housing situation in the River–Myrtle planning area. This zoning district treats residential and office uses as equal, but in reality market pressures in the River–Myrtle planning area encourage converting houses to offices and replacing residential structures with office buildings. The River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan includes development guidelines to retain and increase the supply of housing in the River Street and Parkside neighborhoods, and to encourage the development of more housing in the Courthouse Corridor, all three of which are under R-O zoning. Possible revisions to the R-O district, or development of an urban residential district should be considered to address how to encourage housing development in downtown.

Another issue related to the R-O zoning district pertains to the Courthouse Corridor. The level of development intensity being built in the corridor is much greater than is typical for the R-O district. The typical height limit for R-O is between 35 and 47.5 feet; the Ada County Courthouse is 100 feet and the Idaho Water Center is 75 feet in height. These developments received approval for height exceptions which are allowed by City Code with approval by the Planning & Zoning Commission. The

allowance for these larger buildings was in keeping with the location of the corridor on the Connector, which is a major thoroughfare. These projects have now set a benchmark, and developers are likely to seek height exceptions for future projects. Whether the Courthouse Corridor should continue under R-O zoning or whether it should be changed to C-5 or a new zoning district allowing higher intensity, mixed use development needs to be evaluated.

C-2 and C-3 Districts

The C-2 district provides for commercial areas that fulfill needs for travel-related service and retail sales areas along travel routes and within community shopping centers. Allowed uses include automobile sales lots, service stations, minor auto repair shops, car washes and convenience stores. The C-3 district provides for service businesses that are more intensive than those permitted in other commercial zones and which are semi-industrial in character. Examples of businesses allowed in this district include auction establishments, automobile-related businesses including sales lots, services stations, minor and major auto repair and car washes, construction businesses, heavy machinery supply, seed and garden supply, storage businesses, warehouses, truck stops, transit terminals and convenience stores.

The overall intent of this master plan is to promote urban intensities and a pedestrian-oriented character in the River–Myrtle planning area. C-2 and C-3 promote a lower intensity, auto-oriented character more typical of outlying areas. Many of the allowed uses in these districts would be inappropriate in a downtown setting and are prohibited in C-5 and R-O, which cover much of the downtown area.

This plan recommends that the C-2 and C-3 be replaced by a different zone category more conducive to achieving the goals of the plan.

Evaluating and possibly revising the zoning designations in River–Myrtle planning area is an important step in creating consistency between the plan, existing land use patterns and development regulations. The plan includes action steps regarding the C-5, R-O, C-2 and C-3 zoning designations in the subdistrict plans for the West Connector, River Street Neighborhood, East Connector/Parkside and Courthouse Corridor.

DD and HD Overlay Districts

The Boise City Zoning Ordinance includes a “downtown design review” or DD designation that applies to properties located in an urban renewal district. This designation requires that development applications be referred to CCDC for comment prior to the city taking action. CCDC provides comments on the degree to which the development proposal implements the plan for that district. The Planning & Zoning Commission, Design Review Committee and City Council take such comments into consideration when making decisions on development proposals.

The zoning ordinance also includes a “historic design review” or HD designation that applies to properties in city-adopted historic districts. In some cases, properties are included in both a historic district and an urban renewal district. Where such overlaps occur, the properties are shown on the zoning map with an HD designation rather than both an HD and DD designation. The regulations governing the HD designation do not include a requirement that development applications for properties that are in both a historic district and an urban renewal district be referred to CCDC for comment. In actuality, Boise City staff refers such cases to CCDC for comment in order to maintain a consistent process for all properties in urban renewal districts. Revising the zoning ordinance to include referral of development applications to CCDC when properties with an HD designation are also in an urban renewal district would recognize this practice.

Appendix A:

River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Design Plan - Excerpts

A. OVERALL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1. New, mixed-use redevelopment should reinforce activities in greater Downtown Boise:

- Expand the focus of regional employment, services, entertainment, cultural, government uses with additional residential, office, and retail uses—including neighborhood and community shopping uses;
- Re-establish River Street and Myrtle Street areas as mixed use neighborhoods;
- Capitalize on the recently adopted R-O zoning to expand the choices of housing types for Boiseans;
- Ensure an affordable component in new housing projects;
- Limit the concentration of social service programs within the study area;
- Maintain Downtown Boise as the center of Federal, State County and City institutions particularly Administrative, Judicial, Legal and public uses;
- Accommodate long term expansion of Central Business District uses primarily on large, undeveloped parcels west of Capitol Boulevard;
- Encourage pedestrian activity and increase pedestrian safety.

2. Build on existing attributes within the area:

- Extend the character of the Greenbelt and Julia Davis Park into adjacent subdistricts;
- Expand the range and strength of cultural uses in the 8th Street area. Incorporate public art to identify, define and enhance streetscapes, public spaces and neighborhoods;
- Reinforce established uses that contribute to the diversity of activities in Downtown Boise;
- Preserve and reinforce areas of existing urban character.

3. Foster an urban character in redevelopment:

- Respect existing urban neighborhood development patterns: blocks, grid streets, mid-block parking, street oriented buildings and detached sidewalks with street trees;
- Encourage a pedestrian orientation of new development in the design and location of buildings, streets, parking and open space;
- Provide flexibility in the design of buildings for the changing nature of uses, anticipating the influences of information technology, live-work, etc.;
- Provide a continuity of pedestrian connections such as sidewalks, entry paths and signalized crossings;

-
- Develop and overall parking strategy for the greater Downtown area that includes the following:
 - Maximum as well as minimum parking requirements for various uses (the initial phase of a metropolitan area plan);
 - Neighborhood protection ordinances for spill-over parking;
 - A transportation management plan for larger projects with incentives for shared parking, car pooling, transit use, bike use, shuttle service and pedestrian orientation of development;
 - Incentives for below grade and structured parking as well as air rights development over surface parking and/or structured parking.

4. Create memorable and dignified streets that complement the activity and design of adjacent uses:

- Reinforce a hierarchy of streets in Downtown Boise not only by traffic capacity but also by design treatment of sidewalks, crosswalks, street trees, lighting and furnishings:
 - The five distinct design treatments are Urban Street, Parkway, special Parkway at Capitol Boulevard, Neighborhood Street and Visual/Circulation Access Corridor (see *Street Character Framework* for detail description);
 - Ensure coordination between the pedestrian and bicycle route system and the public open space system;
- Incorporate public art to identify, define and enhance streetscapes, public spaces and neighborhoods.

B. THE CONCEPT

1. A vital central city made up of urban, mixed use subdistricts will be strengthened and diversified.
2. A framework of streets, paths and open spaces will build on existing Downtown Boise networks and strengthen connections to the river.
3. Residential uses with an affordable component will be re-established in River Street and Myrtle Street areas.
4. The character and benefits of the Boise River Greenbelt and Julia Davis Park will be extended into and connected to the subdistricts.
5. An emerging cultural focus in the Eight Street subdistrict will be reinforced and expanded.

Map Key

R-1C	Single Family Residential	A	Open Land
R-2	Combined Residential	U	University
R-3	Multi Family Residential	C	Capitol Boulevard Overlay
N-O	Neighborhood Office	D	Design Review (DR) Overlay
L-O	Limited Office	HD	Historic DR Overlay
R-O	Residential Office	DD	Downtown DR Overlay
C-1	Neighborhood Commerical	H	Historic Overlay
C-2	General Commerical	CD	Conservation District Overlay
C-3	Service Commercial	DA	Development Agreement
C-5	Central Business District		Zoning Boundaries
H-S	Health Service		Urban Renewal Districts

as of 08.10.04

Appendix B: Supplemental Changes

RIVER STREET-MYRTLE STREET MASTER PLAN

SUPPLEMENTAL CHANGES MADE TO AUGUST 23, 2004 DRAFT ADOPTED BY THE CCDC BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS AND TRANSMITTED TO THE BOISE CITY COUNCIL IN THE OCTOBER 12, 2004 FINAL DRAFT

This list contains changes that were made to the August 23, 2004 Draft of the River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan adopted by the CCDC Board of Commissioners, which were accepted by the Boise City Council as part of its action to approve the River Myrtle–Old Boise Urban Renewal Plan, except as otherwise noted. Text that was added is underlined; text that was removed is shown by strikeouts. The reason for each change is noted in parentheses and italics at the end of each item. The plan document titled Final Draft for City Council–October 12, 2004 incorporated these changes. A separate list identifying these changes was entered into the record at the October 12, 2004 public hearing on the River Myrtle–Old Boise Urban Renewal Plan.

In the August 23, 2004 draft, there were comments highlighted in blue that explained where text might need to be modified, added or deleted based on Boise City Council action or when information was pending. Where these comments were resolved prior to October 12, 2004, they were removed without a note being included in the list below.

A limited number of very minor changes to the August 23, 2004 Draft were not included in the list sent to the Boise City Council. Examples include adding a horizontal line at the top of a page consistent with the page format used throughout the plan, bolding subheadings, removing background street names on maps to reduce clutter, and capitalizing words that are consistently capitalized elsewhere but got missed in a particular instance. (The Boise City Council was made aware of this caveat in the transmittal of the list.)

Please Note: After City Council action on November 30, 2004 to approve the River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan, minor changes were made to the plan document to prepare it for publication. These changes do not affect the substance of the document. They are listed at the end of this appendix.

Cover

1. Final Draft for City Council – October 12, 2004

Credits

2. Corrected Zimmer-Gunsul-Frasca to Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership (*remove hyphens; use correct name*)

Table of Contents

3. p. ii, List of Figures: 11:A: West Connector (Former Rail Yards) (*maintain consistency with how “rail yards” appears elsewhere in plan*)

Chapter 1: Introduction

4. p. 6, 1st column, 1st bullet: ...Broadway and Avenue B on the east to 17th Street... (*change th to superscript to maintain consistency with format used throughout plan*)
5. p. 14, 2nd column, 2nd paragraph: ~~Recognizing that property owners, business owners and residents in Old Boise/Eastside have a desire for a master plan that focuses on their area, t~~ The urban renewal plan for the combined River–Myrtle/Old Boise district has been structured so it includes two master plans: one for the original River Street–Myrtle Street ~~area~~ urban renewal district and one for the Old Boise/Eastside study area, with some modification of the boundary between them. ~~The map in Figure 1~~ Figure 11 on page 63 shows how the two areas relate to one another. ~~The Central Business District and Eastside neighborhood shown on the map are in the Old Boise/Eastside planning area and the remaining subdistricts are in the River-Myrtle planning area. This approach maintains continuity in the planning work done for the River-Myrtle area. It~~ Preparing two master plans also recognizes that the property owners, business owners and residents in Old Boise/Eastside who participated in the development of the initial development concept and development goals and policies for this area have a desire for a master plan focused on Old Boise/Eastside. (*Text that appears in August 25, 2004 plan was taken from the Old Boise/Eastside Master Plan and needed to be rewritten so it fits in the River-Myrtle Master Plan.*)

Chapter 2: Eligibility for Urban Renewal Activities

6. p. 16, 1st column, 1st paragraph: ...~~dipicted~~depicted in Figure 1: (*correct spelling*)

Chapter 3: Planning & Policy Context

7. p.18, 1st column, 1st bullet: The Downtown Boise Plan ~~indicates~~ anticipates that the CBD will extend into the area... (*better wording given this is a plan*)
8. p. 18, 1st column, 1st bullet: Regardless of the differences between these plans on the extent of the CBD, ~~These plans are in agreement with the Downtown Boise Plan, except for the nature when describing the type of development expected in the CBD, which is expected to have~~ i.e. high intensity, compact development; with a diverse mix of uses, high level of pedestrian use and 24-hour activity. (*Clearer wording contrasting the differences in the plans re: the extent of the CBD and agreement between the plans on the types of uses anticipated in the CBD.*)
9. p. 20, 2nd column, last paragraph to p. 21: During the preparation of the River-Myrtle Master Plan, it became obvious that ~~describing a vision and writing goals and objectives, and doing mapping for each individual district often causes duplication. It also tends to obscure the message that there is one unified vision for the long-term revitalization of downtown Boise.~~ the vision and many of the design and development

-
- guidelines for downtown redevelopment are common to all of the urban renewal districts. *(better wording; no change in meaning)*
10. p. 21, 1st column, 1st paragraph: In addition, it is helpful to look at certain elements such as land uses, streetscaping, ~~public~~ civic spaces, bicycle and pedestrian routes, and transportation and parking on a downtown-wide basis to see the overall picture. *(civic is term used consistently in plan)*
11. p. 21, 1st column, 1st paragraph: One of the goals of downtown redevelopment is to arrive at a point where these districts function as interconnected places, ~~and where~~ land uses and activity centers in one district complement and support the other districts and downtown functions as an organic whole. *(better sentence construction)*
12. p. 21, 1st column, 2nd paragraph: The 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Plan was created to illustrate the seamless nature of downtown and to describe both the overall vision and goals for its revitalization and the ~~design and development objectives and~~ guidelines shared by all the districts. It depicts the common elements on maps that show all of the districts and the periphery around them so these elements are put into context. Plans, ~~development objectives, and design and development~~ guidelines and action steps that apply to a particular district are stated in the master plan for that district. *(better match text in 2025 Plan; no change in meaning)*
13. p. 21, 2nd column to p. 22, 1st column; list of overall goals for downtown revitalization:

Urban form: ...Develop subdistricts, activity centers and in-town neighborhoods ~~so that each have their own unique identity~~ has its own character and sense of identity. *(better sentence construction; subject-verb agreement)*

Transportation system: ~~Transform the existing~~ Create an effective multimodal transportation system ~~into a well-~~ designed, integrated and effective multimodal system in downtown Boise that promotes walking, bicycling, carpooling and transit, ~~as alternatives to the use of automobiles and reduces dependence on automobiles.~~ Ease traffic flow in downtown by improvements to street design and signalization and by traffic demand management. Develop a multimodal transportation system for the region that addresses potential traffic impacts caused by future growth in downtown, and makes travel to, from and within downtown by alternative modes practical and attractive. *(2025 plan includes revised version of this goal; revisions make transportation goal more comprehensive; recognize automobiles as a factor in transportation; address traffic flow, traffic demand management and regional transportation system)*

Parking system: Provide an adequate supply of parking while minimizing the use of land for surface parking lots. Achieve maximum utilization of parking by developing land uses that have offsetting parking demands, making private parking available to the public when not needed otherwise and ~~connecting parking facilities to activity centers by alternative means of transportation~~ making public parking facilities easily accessible from the various subdistricts and activity centers in downtown. *(clearer wording; correct typo in facilities)*

Chapter 5: Preferred Development Concept

- 14. p. 27, Figure 4: add Americana Blvd to map (*helpful reference for reader*)
- 15. p. 32, footnote: In spring 2004, CCDC conducted a consumer survey of people living in Boise and in Ada County to measure the level of interest in downtown living. Two of the questions focused on what areas of downtown were considered most desirable as a place to live. ~~The Cultural District ranked third after the Heart of Downtown and Old Boise. The River Street and Parkside districts ranked fourth and fifth ahead of the Westside District, which ranked last. When respondents were asked whether they were interested in living in each of six different areas of downtown, they chose the Cultural District more frequently than River Street, Parkside and Westside districts but less frequently than the Heart of Downtown or Old Boise. When asked to pick their top choice among the six areas, approximately 12% of the respondents chose the Cultural District, 12% chose the River Street District, and 9.7% chose the Parkside District as their first choice.~~ (*use more accurate and more understandable description of survey results*)

Chapter 6: Overall Plans, Guidelines and Action Steps

- 16. p. 35, Figure 5: add Americana Blvd to map (*helpful reference for reader*)
- 17. p. 36, column 2, 1st paragraph: It shows a concentration of mixed use, office, institutional and service commercial uses along the Connector, Capitol Boulevard, Broadway and Americana. These streets are ~~classified as principal arterials and~~ carry high volumes of traffic; ~~relative to other downtown streets. Given their functional classification and design, traffic and these volumes on these streets~~ are expected to increase as downtown intensifies over the next 20 years. (Estimates of traffic demand in 2025 on streets in the River-Myrtle planning area are discussed in Section 5: Transportation and Parking of this chapter. These estimates were derived from traffic ~~modeling~~ modelling done as part of the Downtown Boise Mobility Study in 2004.) It is difficult to locate residential uses... (*Response to question raised by CCDC Board member; correct spelling.*)
- 18. p. 39, Figure 6: add Americana Blvd to map (*helpful reference for reader*)
- 19. p. 42; column 2, Guideline 3.2: Apply the Design and Development Guidelines regarding building and site design contained in the 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Pplan to development proposals in the River-Myrtle planning area. (*maintain consistency with references elsewhere to 2025 Boise Redevelopment Plan—include Boise in title; use caps*)
- 20. p. 43, Figure 7: add Americana Blvd to map (*helpful reference for reader*)
- 21. p. 45, column 2, 3rd paragraph: Descriptions of the types of streetscape treatments used in the 2025 Down-town Boise Redevelopment Pplan are provided below. Figure 8 shows where these treatments are expected to be used in River-Myrtle planning area. (*maintain consistency with references elsewhere to 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Plan—include Boise in title; use caps*)
- 22. p. 47, Figure 8: add Americana Blvd to map (*helpful reference for reader*)
- 23. p. 49, Figure 9: add Americana Blvd to map (*helpful reference for reader*)
- 24. p. 51, 2nd column, Guideline 4.3: Use the Streetscape Character map (Figure 8) to identify the type of streetscape treatment required for the streets in the River–Myrtle planning area. Apply the streetscape design

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- standards from the 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Plan when streetscapes are improved in the River–Myrtle area. *(desire to use consistent term for this plan throughout document)*
25. p. 54, 1st column, 1st paragraph. This analysis shows that the intersections of 3rd, 5th, 6th and 9th streets with Front Street will operate at a level of service (LOS) F during the PM peak hour, and steps need to be taken to prevent downtown from choking on commute traffic in the future. *(Waiting on results from DBMS—may need to be rewritten.)*

New material added based on preliminary results from Downtown Boise Mobility Study as follows:

The DBMS proposes a policy for that a level of service (LOS) of D is acceptable during peak hours on downtown streets (see sidebar). This policy recognizes that downtown is more congested than is typical in other areas of Boise, and a certain level of congestion is an acceptable tradeoff in order to maintain downtown Boise as the region’s urban center. The traffic analysis showed that a number of intersections in the River-Myrtle planning area will have a level of service (LOS) of E or F in 2025 during peak hours. These include all intersections on Front and Myrtle except 11th and Myrtle, Grove and 9th, Grove and 6th, Main and 9th, Main and 6th, Broadway and University, Lincoln and University, Capitol and University, River and 9th and Americana and Shoreline.

Most of the congestion predicted by the traffic model is associated with commuter traffic between the region and downtown since downtown is expected to continue growing as an employment center.

Creating a multimodal transportation system for downtown Boise that encourages the use of transit, bicycling and walking as alternatives...

26. p. 54, column 2, paragraph 2: For example, for neighborhoods south of the Boise River and on the Boise Bench, there are only three main crossing points over the Boise River into downtown ~~using that use~~ roadways: Broadway at the east end of the River-Myrtle planning area, Capital Boulevard-8th Street-9th Street Broadway at the east end and, in the center, the three bridges carrying 9th Street, 8th Street and Capitol Boulevard—and. There are also two pedestrian bridges that provide a means of crossing the Boise River from the south.¹ For people crossing at Capital Boulevard-8th Street-9th Street the center point, 8th Street as the route to and from downtown... *(clearer wording for reader not familiar with Boise)*
27. p. 57, Figure 10: add Americana Blvd to map *(helpful reference for reader)*
28. p. 58, Guideline 5.8: Evaluate Parcel A (bounded by 15th, 13th and the Connector) and Parcel B (bounded by 13th, 11th and the Connector) in the West Connector subdistrict... *(explains location of Parcels A and B)*

Chapter 7: Subdistrict Plans, Guidelines & Action Steps

29. p. 63, Figure 11: add Americana Blvd to map *(helpful reference for reader)*

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30. p. 66, Guideline WC-16: ...the the Warehouse/Cultural District, The Grove Plaza and CBD. *(maintain consistency in name of The Grove throughout plan)*
31. p. 67, 2nd column, 2nd bullet:
- n ~~Implement the streetscaping standards in the 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Plan when street improvements are required as part of a development project or whenever improvements are made to streets in the West Connector subdistrict.~~
 - Implement the streetscaping standards in the 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Plan when street improvements are required as part of a development project or whenever improvements are made to streets in the West Connector subdistrict. *(fix wacky format in plan)*
32. p. 75, footnote: ...Also across Capitol Boulevard is the Basque Block, where the Basque Museum and Cultural Center is located, and the Flicks Theater. *(add comma)*
33. p. 80, 2nd bullet: ...for Fall for Boise, the city's annual month-long celebration of the arts, to breathe life into this concept. *(add comma)*
34. p. 85, 1st column, 1st paragraph: The Courthouse Corridor is bounded on the north side by property owned by Ada County, Broadway Avenue on the east, Julia Davis Park on the south and 3rd and 2nd streets on the west, the University of Idaho property on the west side of Broadway between Front and Myrtle Streets, Kreizenbeck office building at 251 E. Front Street, Adams property on the northeast corner of Myrtle and Avenue A and the Winco warehouse grocery store. It is bordered by the West Connector/Parkside subdistrict, Old Boise/Eastside planning area, St. Luke's Regional Medical Center, MK Plaza, and Julia Davis Park and the Boise River. *(duplicate and confusing deleted)*
35. p. 89, Guideline CC-11: Work with property owners to improve the Broad Street alignment from 2nd Street to Broadway Avenue as a pedestrian promenade, ~~that works as which provides~~ a walking and bicycling connection through their properties. Recommend this connection be included when reviewing new developments ~~projects traversed by this alignment~~ when the Broad Street alignment crosses or abuts these projects. ~~Restore Broad Street as~~ Reconstruct a street on the Broad Street alignment where feasible. *(clearer wording)*

Chapter 8: Implementation

36. p.96, 1st column, list of figures: Correct amount for parking garages from \$21,187,500 to \$19,312,500; for property acquisition from \$2,550,000 to \$1,800,000; cultural investments from 196,875 to \$169,438. Correct total from \$66,661,555 to \$64,009,118. *(correct figures based on revised economic feasibility study))*
37. p.97, 1st column, 3rd paragraph: The City of Boise has achieved some success in implementing the Downtown Boise Plan by establishing the Central Business ~~District~~ (C-5) and the Residential Office (R-O) zoning classifications. *(use correct district name)*

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Additional Corrections for Publication

After City Council action on November 30, 2004 to approve the River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan, necessary corrections were made to the plan document to prepare it for publication. These corrections were very limited and did not affect the substance of the document. They include the following items:

The usage and capitalization of the terms River Street–Myrtle Street Urban Renewal District, River Street–Myrtle Street Master Plan, River–Myrtle planning area was made consistent throughout. References to the Old Boise–Eastside Master Plan, which is a companion document, and to the Old Boise–Eastside planning area have been changed so the format of the name is as shown rather than Old Boise/Eastside.

Duplicate or misspelled words, stray punctuation and errors in subject-verb agreement have been corrected. Page numbers and figure numbers that were highlighted in blue (in order to assist in proofreading the document) have been changed to black. Notes in blue indicating text that needed to be edited once the outcome of the City Council’s action was known have been removed, and the text has been edited appropriately and changed to black.

References to the 2025 Downtown Boise Redevelopment Plan (which sometimes appeared under this name and sometimes under 2025 Downtown Redevelopment Plan) have been changed to be consistent throughout except for the title in the sidebar on page 16—where the title would be too long if the full name was used.

In the specific plan for the East Connector/Parkside subdistrict, the following corrections were made:

- 38. p. 82, EC-4; p. 84, 1st bullet, 2nd bullet: Change West Connector/Parkside subdistrict to East Connector/Parkside subdistrict (*error in name of subdistrict*)
- 39. p. 83, EC-9; p. 84, 7th bullet: Change reference to Warehouse/Cultural District to East Connector/Parkside subdistrict (*word processing error from copying text*)

In the specific plan for the Courthouse Corridor subdistrict, the following corrections were made:

- 40. p. 88, 2nd column, 2nd paragraph: Every effort should be made ~~to moderate the impact of transform~~ Front and Myrtle ~~into boulevard-style streets to moderate its impact on adjacent properties; with by creating~~ a more appealing pedestrian environment along ~~their~~ edges. This plan envisions the Connector transformed into a ~~set of more~~ boulevard-style streets that continues to provide a high capacity vehicular route to, from and through downtown, but are also compatible with a downtown setting. (*correct incomplete, scrambled sentence*)
- 41. p. 89, 1st column, title: Design ~~and~~ & Development Guidelines (*correct format to match other titles*)
- 42. p. 89, CC-4, CC-5; p. 90, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th bullets under action steps; p. 91, 4th bullet: Change Courthouse Corridor to Courthouse Corridor subdistrict (*make reference consistent*)
- 43. p. 89, CC-9; p. 91, 2nd bullet: Change Warehouse/Cultural District to Courthouse Corridor subdistrict (*word processing error from copying text*)
- 44. p. 90, 5th bullet under action steps; last line: Change Corridor to Courthouse Corridor subdistrict (*make reference consistent*)

