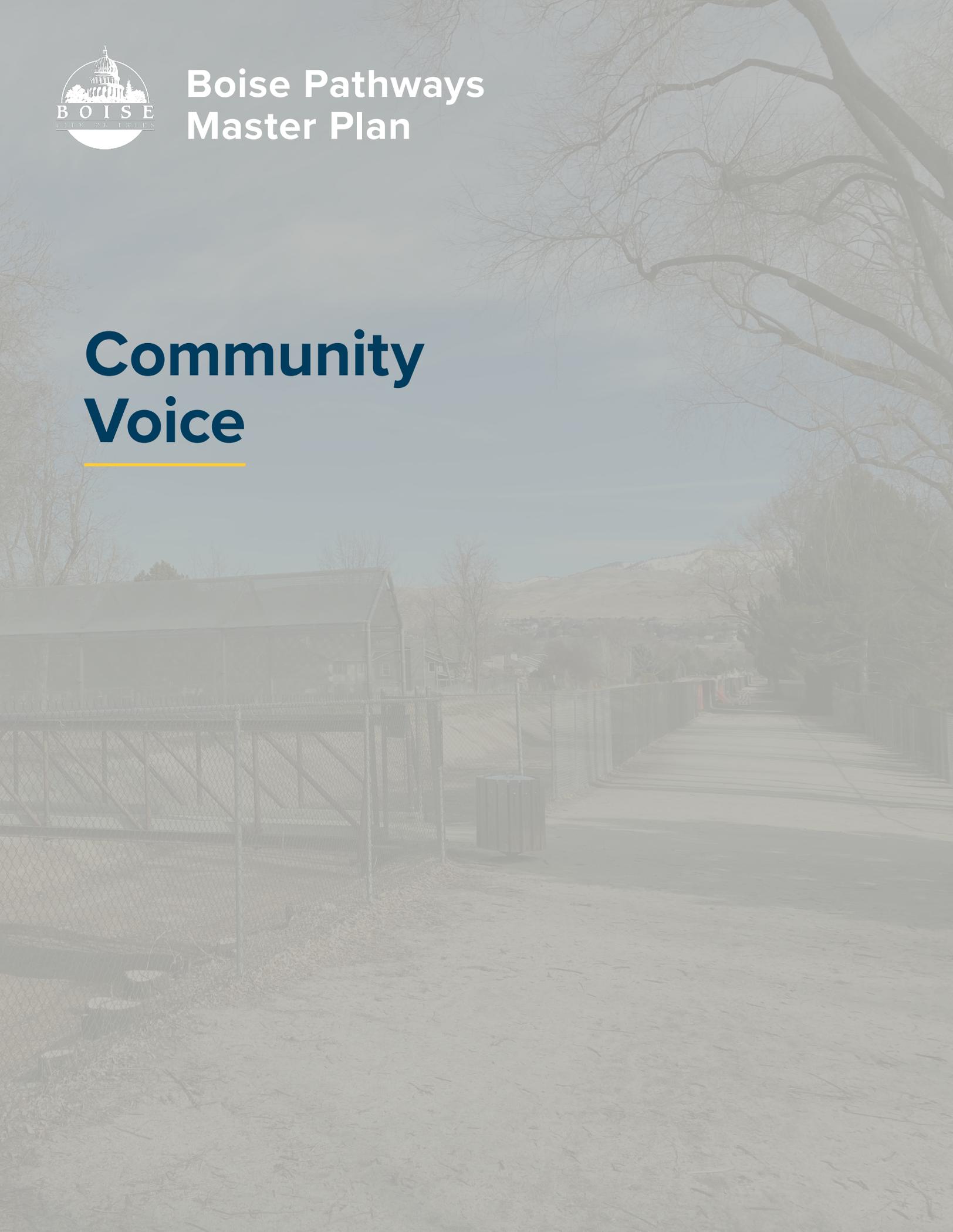




# Boise Pathways Master Plan

## Community Voice

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# OVERVIEW

Hearing from people who live, work, and play in Boise was critical in identifying opportunities, challenges, and goals for the pathway system. Input and ideas were solicited both online and in-person, collected via an online survey, online interactive map, and smaller community discussions. This chapter summarizes what we heard.



## ONLINE SURVEY

- Open for 5 weeks
- 2,169 respondents



## WEB MAP

- Open for 5 weeks
- 1,039 suggestions drawn



## COMMUNITY MEETINGS

- 4 events with  $\pm 20$  participants at each

## ONLINE SURVEY

Over a period of five weeks, over 2,000 people responded to an online survey geared toward understanding how and why people use the Boise pathways. This 13-question survey sought information about how people currently use pathways, what prevents more pathway use, and what more pathway connections would mean to Boiseans.

### OUTCOMES & LESSONS LEARNED

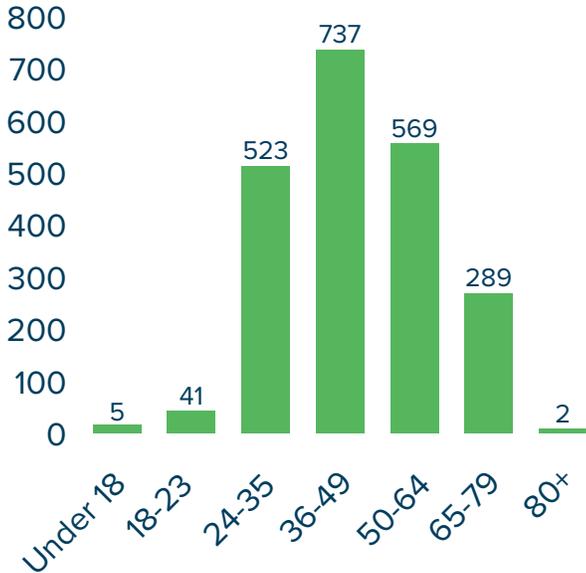
A large number of survey responses provided a better understanding for how the community currently uses Boise's pathway system, and what challenges they encounter in using it. The following points are some key themes pulled from the survey results:

- Participants use existing pathways for recreation more than transportation, but almost 40 percent still use pathways for transportation at least three times a week.
- Participants primarily use pathways to access destinations such as Downtown, restaurants and entertainment, and parks or other recreational spaces.
- Limited access to pathways, pathways that feel unsafe due to adjacent vehicular traffic, and no pathways that reach needed destinations limits participants pathway use.
- Most students are driven to school by a parent; 31 percent walk, bike, or roll.

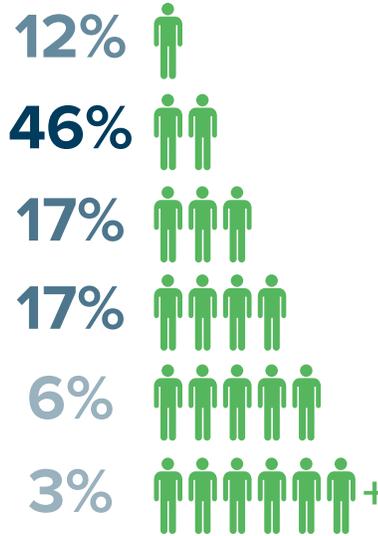
The following pages break down the overall survey demographic reach and results.

**SURVEY PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS**

**AGE OF RESPONDENTS**



**HOUSEHOLD SIZE**



**HOUSEHOLD DESCRIPTION**



**RESPONDENTS ZIP CODES**

*Survey responses came from all over the Treasure Valley, with most responses coming from people living in the North End/Downtown area and Southeast Boise. Map 3.1 illustrates survey responses by zip code.*

**RELATION TO BOISE**



**57%**  
Live in Boise

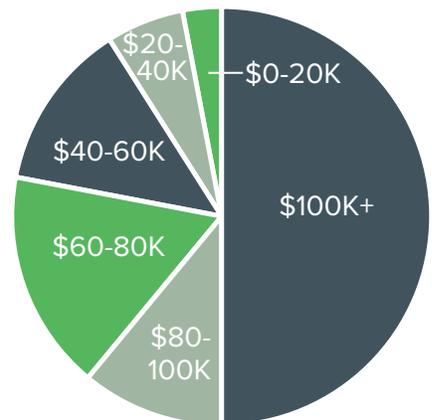


**34%**  
Work in Boise



**8%**  
Visit Often

**HOUSEHOLD INCOME**



**SURVEY RESULTS**

FREQUENCY OF PATHWAY USE						
		Daily	A few times a week	A few times a month	Rarely	Never
	For <b>Recreation or Exercise</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>1%</b>
	<b>Transportation</b> (To Work, School, Etc.)	<b>12%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>12%</b>

**TOP THREE REASONS PEOPLE WOULD LIKE TO USE PATHWAYS**

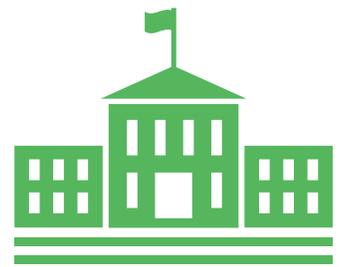
-  Access Downtown
-  Access restaurants and entertainment
-  Access local parks, trailheads, or other recreation space

**TOP THREE REASONS PARTICIPANTS DO NOT USE PATHWAYS MORE**

-  No safe/convenient access/no pathways nearby
-  Pathways feel unsafe due to car-related hazards
-  They don't connect to where participants need to go

**HOW CHILDREN GET TO SCHOOL IF PARTICIPANTS HAVE CHILDREN AT HOME**

- Students Drive Themselves **11%** 
- Ride the Bus **14%** 
- Walk, Bike, or Roll **31%** 
- Parent/Guardian Personal Vehicle **41%** 



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**SURVEY RESULTS**


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When asked, ***“What would more pathway connections in Boise mean to you?”***, survey and community meeting participants expressed a wide range of opinions, preferences, and desired outcomes for the plan. Responses were summarized through the lens of the the project goals, and some additional themes emerged, which led to a refinement of the goals of this plan.

**# OF MENTIONS****MOST FREQUENTLY MENTIONED THEMES****412****ENHANCED QUALITY OF LIFE**

- Easy access to outdoor recreation
- Healthy and happy lifestyles
- More enjoyable commuting

*“It would greatly enhance the livability factor of the city...”*

**372****MORE CONNECTIONS**

- to Downtown
- to Schools
- to everyday needs

*“More people might choose to walk or bike more often for transportation if there was a well connected pathway network they felt safe and comfortable on that get them to multiple locations within a reasonable amount of time. This is important for many reasons for our city.”*

**319****LESS DRIVING. LESS TRAFFIC.**

- Likelihood of driving less
- Less pressure on roadways

*“I’d ride my bike and walk more often! I live on the bench and an easier connection to the greenbelt that feels safe and accessible would mean I would rarely drive anywhere in the spring and summer months.”*

**297****SAFETY**

- Ability to avoid busy streets
- Most roads are unsafe for kids

*“I live in an area right off Overland and can’t ride or walk anywhere without being on a major road, cars going 40 or 50 mph”*

**92****A BETTER PATHWAY SYSTEM**

- More pathways to choose from
- Less traffic on Greenbelt
- Better access to/from pathways

*“More pathways could shift some current volume off of the Greenbelt and in the foothills.”*

*“We don’t live far from the Federal Way pathway, but it is very dangerous to get to because there is not a cross walk near us”*

## # OF MENTIONS

## MOST FREQUENTLY MENTIONED THEMES

83

## EQUITY &amp; CHOICE

- Improved access and amenities for residents in historically underserved neighborhoods
- More transportation choices

*“A more multi-modal city. Improved safety for non-motorized travel. More options and possibility to travel without a car. A city for everyone.”*

61

## ECONOMIC VITALITY

- A more attractive city
- More exploration of the City
- Better access to businesses and employment centers

*“The greenbelt was one of the primary motivators for my spouse and I when we moved to Boise 10 years ago. Since then we have opened and operate two small businesses and bought a home in Boise. I see our pathways as the lifeblood of our community.”*

## MORE TAKEAWAYS

A handful of additional themes were consistently present in general public comments, including comments related to...

- **Environmental quality:** Lowering emissions improving air quality.
- **Social benefits and sense of community:** More family time outdoors, interaction with neighbors and strangers
- **Utilization of canal corridors:** Many respondents expressed a desire to formalize canal corridor use and that they feel safer next to canals than fast-moving cars
- **Pathway etiquette and regulation:** Mitigating pathway user conflicts, education and enforcement of pathway rules

**MAP 3.1**  
**SURVEY RESPONSE**  
**BY ZIPCODE**  
 Boise Pathways Master Plan

NEED FOR ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION  
 OPTIONS BASED ON DEMOGRAPHICS

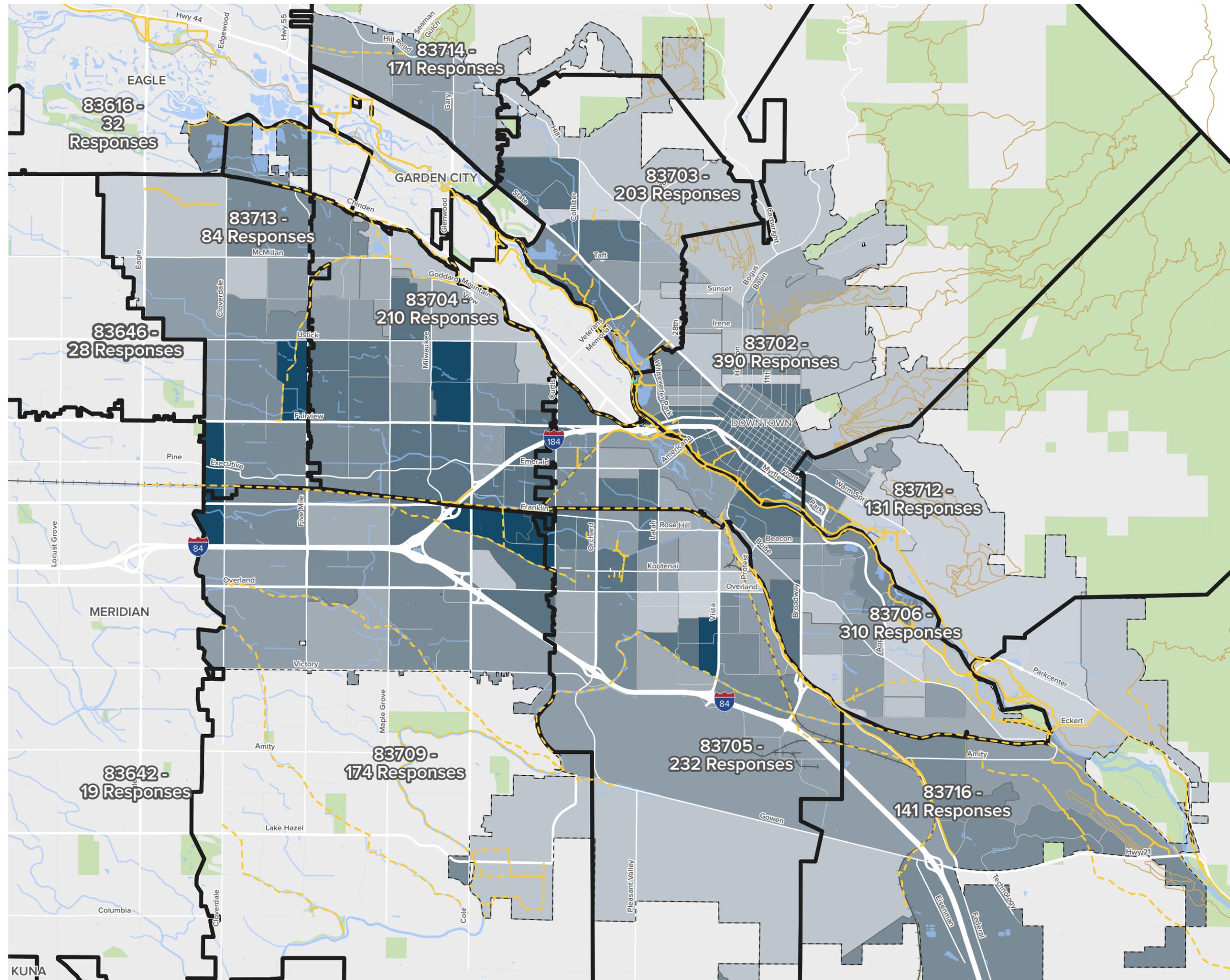
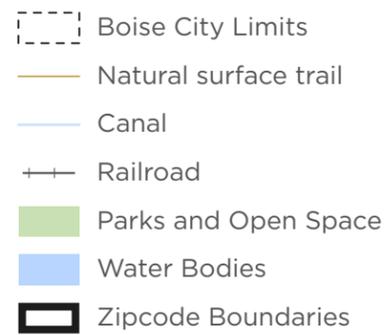


Data was analyzed at the census block group level using data from the 2013-18 ACS 5-year estimates.

EXISTING PATHWAYS



BASEMAP LAYERS

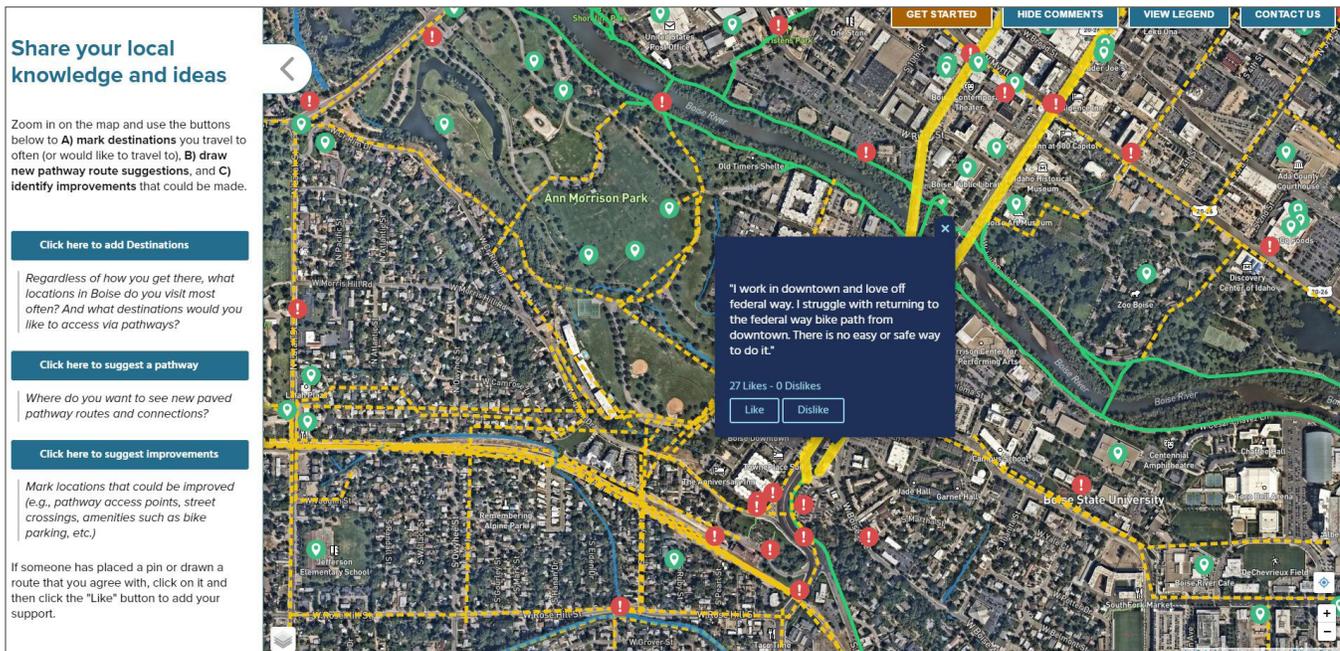


Source: City of Boise; Ada County  
 Date: January 2021



## INTERACTIVE WEB MAP

In conjunction with the survey, respondents were also invited to identify opportunities and challenges related to pathways in Boise using an online interactive map, which collected over 1,000 suggestions from roughly 1,000 unique participants. Participants were prompted to 1) mark destinations they would like to access using pathways, 2) identify improvement areas (regarding safety, accessibility, etc.), and 3) suggest new pathway routes and connections. Participants were also able to “like/dislike” suggestions made by others to help the planning team identify broader community preferences and concerns.



Above: screenshot from the interactive web map

### SUGGESTED PATHWAY ROUTES

Map 3.2 illustrates suggested pathway routes and connections made by survey respondents, organized by popularity. While the primary focus of this plan is off-street corridors, many people expressed a desire for separation from cars along roadways. Some of the most commonly suggested/liked routes include:

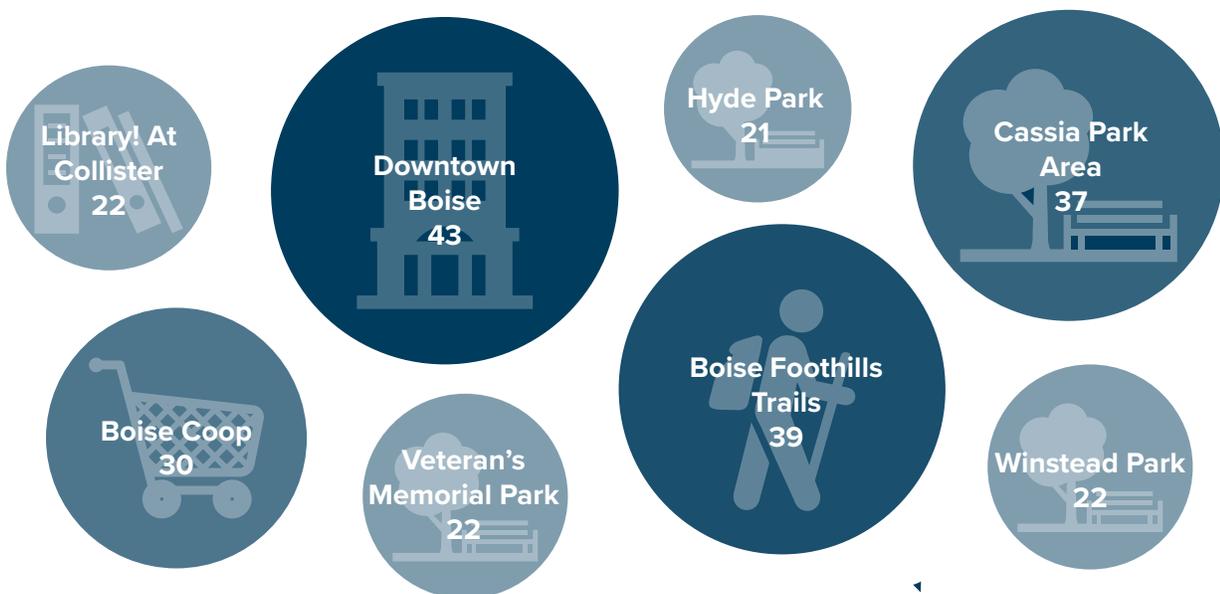
- The railroad corridor, especially between Boise Towne Square and Boise Depot, as well as the rail spur from Hartman St to Irving St
- Settlers Canal from Maple Grove Rd to the Greenbelt
- Connections between the Bench, Greenbelt, and foothills via Veterans Memorial Parkway
- Farmers Union Canal corridor in Northwest Boise

The key themes for pathway development that were revealed by the web map:

- Community members would like to see canals and railway corridors utilized for more pathways
- Provide safe access for all Boise neighborhoods to easily reach the greenbelt
- Connect pathways to commonly-accessed destinations like Downtown, the mall, neighborhood parks, and the foothills

## WHERE DO PEOPLE WANT TO GO?

Respondents were asked to mark destinations they visit often, and where they would like to go using pathways. Some of the most frequently mentioned destinations (with respective number of likes/mentions) include:



## SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS

Suggested improvements to the pathway system were marked by participants, indicating existing pathways and access infrastructure that could be improved. While the locations and comments regarding needed improvements were diverse, most of the comments fit into the following general themes:

- Street crossing improvements
- Improved access to the Boise River Greenbelt
- Provide lighting along pathways
- Improve pavement quality on older pathways
- Provide city-wide pathway connections so bike lanes and trails don't come to a sudden end
- Minimize the impact of adjacent roadways on feelings of safety while using the pathway system

# MAP 3.2 PUBLIC INPUT - SUGGESTED ROUTES

Boise Pathways Master Plan

## NUMBER OF SUGGESTIONS

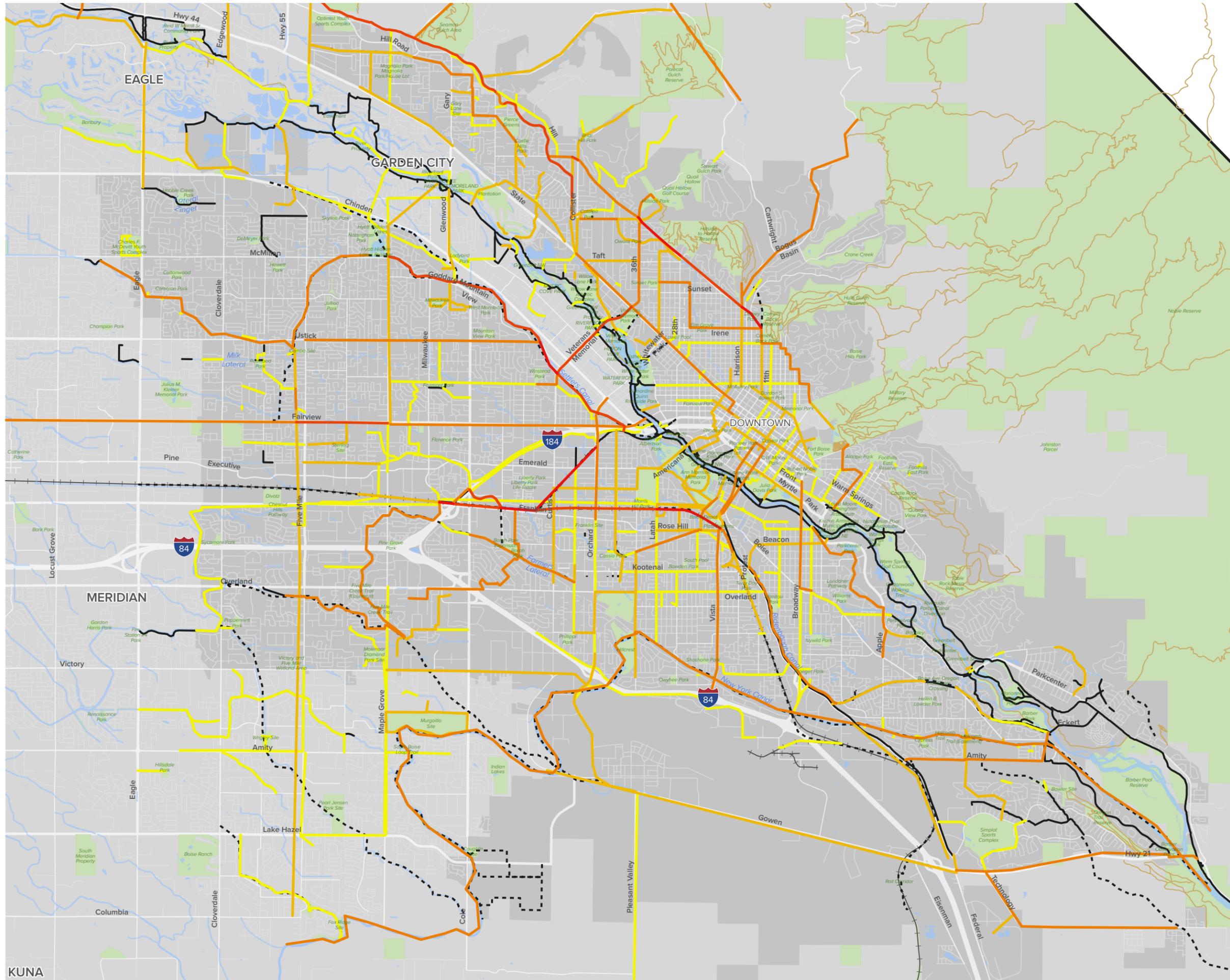
- 75+
- 51 - 75
- 21 - 50
- 6 - 20
- 0 - 5

## PATHWAYS

- - - Planned Pathways
- Existing Pathways

## BASEMAP LAYERS

- Natural surface trail
- Canal
- + + Railroad
- Water Bodies
- Parks and Open Space
- Ada County



Source: City of Boise; Ada County  
Date: January 2021



KUNA

# MAP 3.3 PUBLIC INPUT - DESTINATIONS

Boise Pathways Master Plan

MARKED DESTINATIONS BY NUMBER OF LIKES RECEIVED

- 0 - 5
- 6 - 10
- 11 - 15
- 16 - 20
- 21+

ACTIVITY CENTERS

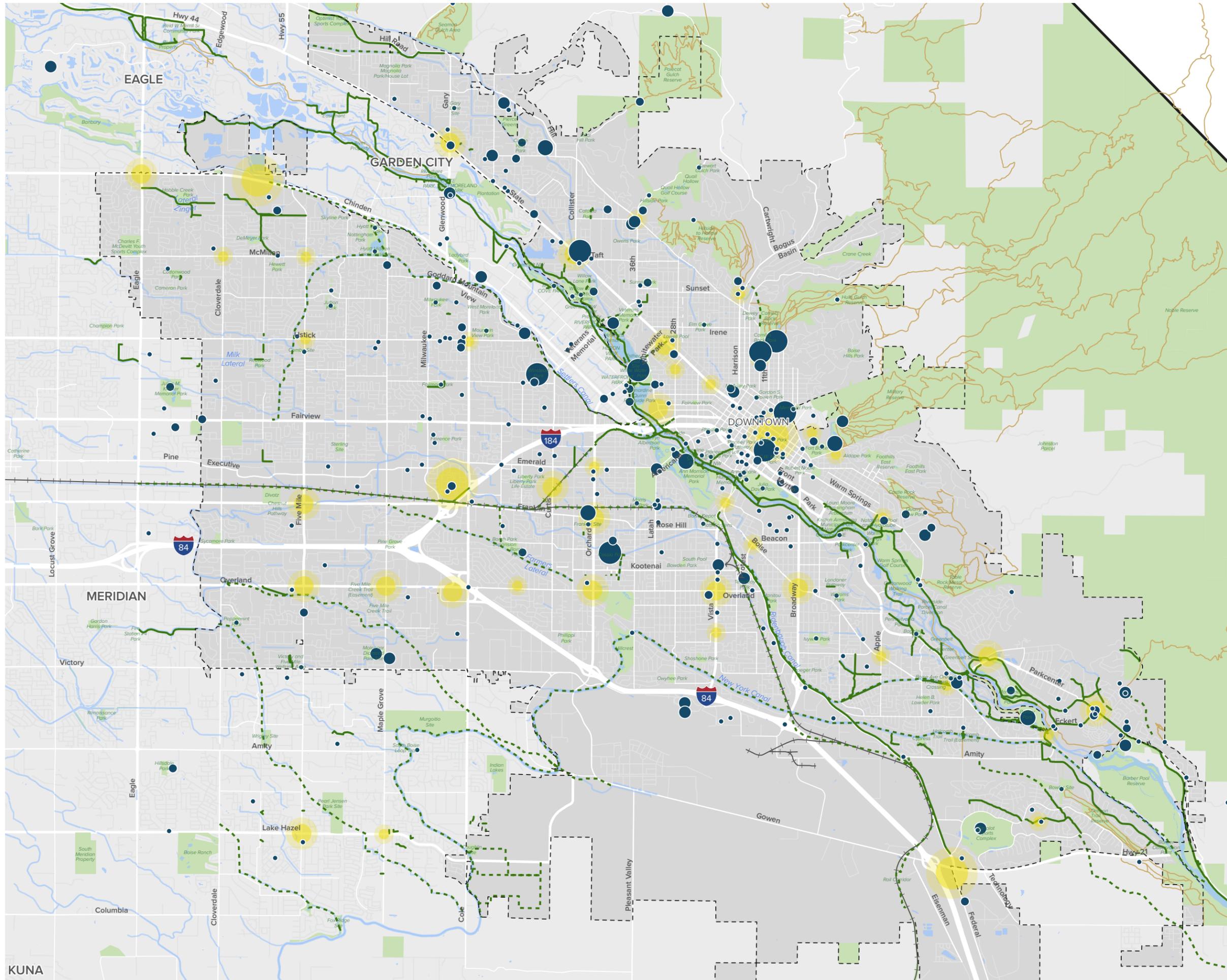
- Regional Activity Center
- Community Activity Center
- Neighborhood Activity Center

PATHWAYS

- Existing Pathways
- - - Planned Pathways

BASEMAP LAYERS

- - - Boise City Limits
- Natural surface trail
- Canal
- Railroad
- ▭ Ada County
- Parks and Open Space
- Water Bodies



Source: City of Boise; Ada County  
Date: January 2021



## COMMUNITY MEETINGS

As part of the Phase I: Listen + Learn outreach process, community members were invited to attend one of two in-person or two virtual Neighborhood Conversations. For each event, space was limited to 20 participants with advanced registration required. The in-person events were held at Municipal and Winstead Park, with all participants practicing physical distancing. The virtual events were held using Zoom.

The neighborhood conversations sought to actively solicit input from a wide range of community members on existing pathway conditions and future vision, as well as raise awareness about the project.

We asked participants to share thoughts about plan opportunities, concerns, and ways to stay involved. The following themes emerged:

### CURRENT PATHWAY SYSTEM USED FOR COMMUTE AND RECREATION

Many participants use the existing pathway system for both recreation and commute purposes. Many who live within easy access of an existing pathway will either walk or bike to the pathway. However, some participants noted that since they live far from a pathway, they often drive to Greenbelt to walk or bike for recreation.

### NEED FOR INCREASED CAPACITY WITHIN SYSTEM

The COVID-19 Pandemic showed participants how important open space is in our community. Many participants felt that the pathways experienced increase in usage and crowds. Participants believed that expanding the system would help to relieve some of the congestion on the Greenbelt and Foothills trails.

*Below: City of Boise staff facilitating neighborhood discussion*



## **AN EXPANDED PATHWAY SYSTEM WILL OPEN UP THE CITY FOR EVERYONE**

Many participants agreed that an expanded pathway system would “open” up the city for everyone. People saw an expanded pathway system as an opportunity to make it easier and more convenient to see new parts of the city. As well, many mentioned that an expanded pathway system will create opportunity for new businesses and spaces across the city.

## **COORDINATE WITH PARTNER AGENCIES**

Participants urged the city to coordinate with other agencies in order to create a seamless pathway system. Many urged us to connect to Ada County Highway District on street bike and pedestrian facilities or to connect through Garden City to the greenbelt.

## **MAKE USEFUL CONNECTIONS**

Participants expressed a desire for the expanded pathway system to connect to important destinations such as schools, restaurants, and parks. They felt that connecting to places

## **CONCERNS ABOUT SAFETY OF ALL USERS**

As the pathway system is expanded, many expressed concern about the safety of all users. Some safety concerns included addressing conflicts between cars and pathway users when having to cross an on-street facility and the conflict between pathways users that move at different speeds (bikers, walkers, scooters, etc.). Some suggested that as the pathway system is expanded the city should invest in bicycle/ pedestrian education and culture building to address these issues.