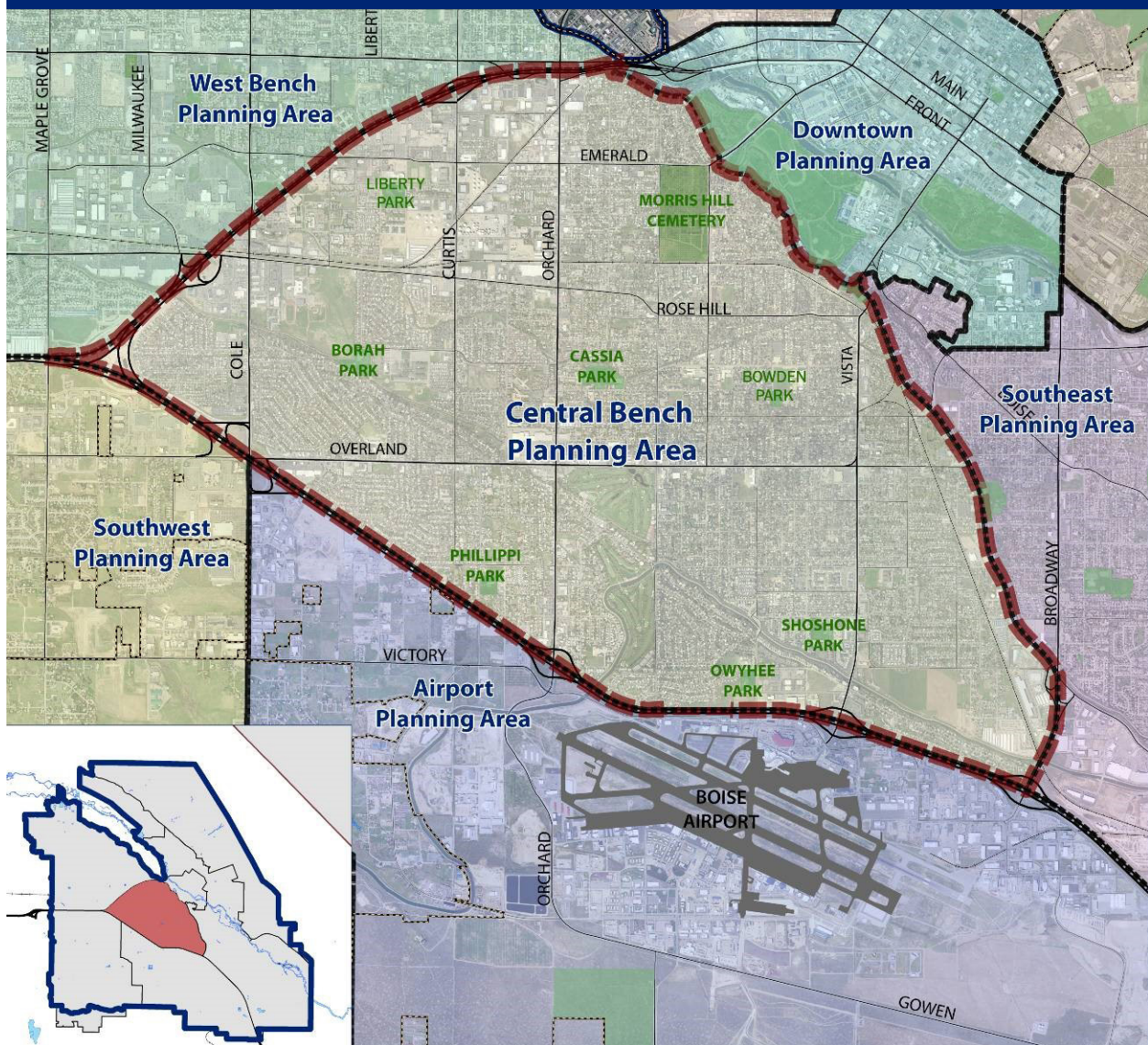


CENTRAL BENCH PLANNING AREA



Location and Context

The Central Bench Planning Area (“Central Bench”) is centrally located between the Downtown and Airport Planning Areas. Central Bench contains a broad mix of residential, commercial, office, medical, and industrial uses. Access to the Union Pacific Rail lines, interstate and arterial roadways facilitate the distribution of goods and services in this area and provide access to nearby community assets such as BSU, the Boise Towne Square Mall and Downtown Boise. The Central Bench is also home to the Boise Depot, the city’s historic railroad depot, which sits high on the bench overlooking the State Capitol, the Boise River, the Foothills and the Downtown.

Many Central Bench neighborhoods were developed in the 1950s and 1960s, and offer smaller, more affordable priced homes than are available in other parts of the city. The area has seen some disinvestment over time; however, competitively-priced homes, amenities, and its proximity to Downtown have begun to spur some residential and commercial infill development in recent years. Protection of established neighborhood character and livability are key objectives for the Central Bench. The Central Bench also offers diverse schools, a high proportion of urban parkland, the Morris Hill Cemetery, and a private golf course.



TRENDS AND KEY ISSUES

- Population and Households
- Over 16 percent of Boise residents lived in the Central Bench, with a population of 42,634 in 2009. Population is projected to increase to 44,359 by 2025.
- Central Bench households are projected to increase by 6.8 percent (from 17,198 to 18,368) between 2008 and 2025.

Employment

- The Central Bench is well-balanced: 15 percent of Boise jobs and 17 percent of its workforce is located here.
- Central Bench jobs are projected to increase nearly 15 percent by 2025 (from 22,172 in 2007 to 25,517).

Transportation

- Central Bench is defined on its south and west sides by interstate I-84.
- The Central Bench is well-served by public transit, primarily by bus routes. Nearly 12 percent of Central Bench residents reported using public transit to commute to work in 2000.
- The average commute time for a Central Bench worker in 2000 was 16.9 minutes.
- Orchard and Emerald Streets and Vista and Overland Streets are constrained transportation corridors in the Central Bench.
- The sidewalk system is lacking but the street system is relatively fine.

Location and Context (Continued)

The Central Bench is largely developed and is constrained by surrounding developments and/or roadways. The area has seen significant small lot redevelopment in recent years. Redevelopment is occurring as older commercial retail centers complete major renovations such as the Vista Village shopping center while others, like the Hillcrest Shopping Center have undergone minor renovations to upgrade the exterior to create a more modern appearance.

Land Use Characteristics

Existing Land Use

- The Central Bench contains 6,008 acres, or 7.8 percent of Boise's total acres.
- Single-family residential uses occupy more than half (45.7 percent) of the Central Bench (2,745 acres.) Multi-family residential uses occupy an additional 243 acres (four percent).
- The Central Bench has more land in office use (369 acres) than any other planning area, which is 28 percent of all land in office use in Boise.
- Just seven percent (417 acres) of the land in the Central Bench is vacant.

Demographic Profile

Population

Population: In 2010, the population of the Central Bench was 38,689.

Median Age: Central Bench residents are younger (33.6) than Boise residents.

Housing

Total Households: In 2009, the Central Bench was home to 17,976 households. This accounts for approximately 18 percent of Boise's households.

Household Composition: The number of families with children under the age of 20 residing in the Central Bench (25.5%) is slightly lower than in Boise as a whole.

Median Home Value: Median home value in the Central Bench (\$154,570), lower than the median value for Boise as a whole.

Tenancy: Almost half of Central Bench residents rent their homes (42.7%). Homeowners represent 51.5 percent of all households.

Income

Median Household Income: In 2009, median household income for Central Bench residents was \$47,038.

Employment

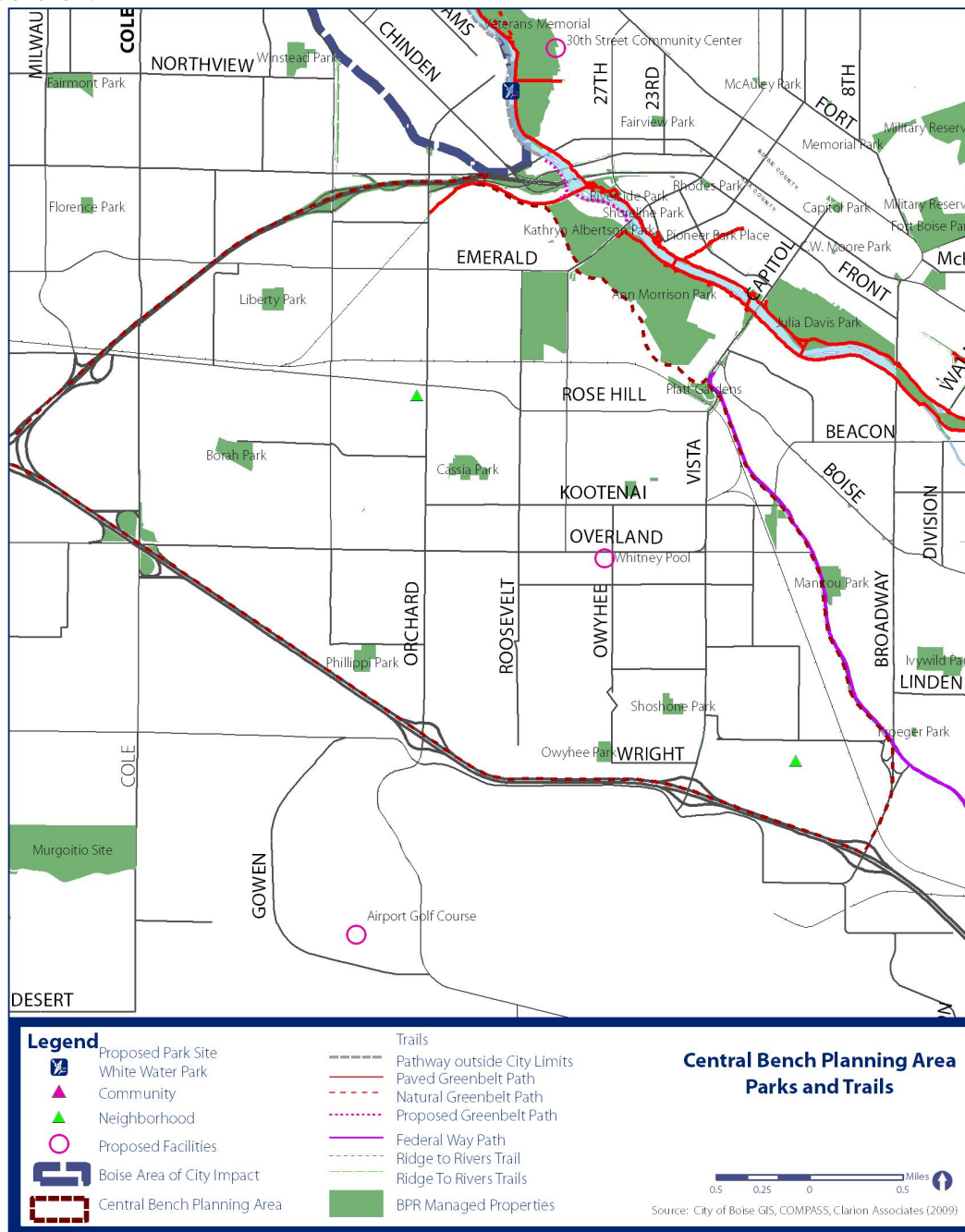
Jobs: Just over 14 percent of Boise jobs are located in the Central Bench. Saint Alphonsus Regional Medical Center is a significant regional employer in the Central Bench.

Workforce: Central Bench workers represent nearly 17 percent of the Boise workforce.

Parks and Recreation

The Central Bench is home to a dozen developed parks. Many of these are small neighborhood and dog parks, such as Owyhee Park, Bowden Park, Phillippi Park, Borah Park and Morris Hill Park which offer recreation to nearby local residents. The Central Bench also has easy access to several larger recreation amenities, such as:

- South Municipal Pool;
- Borah Pool;
- Boise River Greenbelt Pathway system;
- Ann Morrison Park; and
- Julia Davis Park.





TRENDS AND KEY ISSUES

Utilities

- In addition to Boise City service, the Bench Sewer District provides sewer service, water utilities, and irrigation to the Central Bench.

Infill and Redevelopment

- Multi-family building permits issued in the Central Bench nearly doubled (from 50 to 98 annually) between 2000 and 2007.
- Single-family building permits increased from 35 in 2000, to 25 by mid-year 2007.
- Nearly 1 million s.f. of non-residential building space has been built in the Central Bench since 2000; about 7.8 percent of the Boise total of just over 13 million s.f.

Parks and Recreation

- The Central Bench has access to a mix of park facilities, including numerous neighborhood parks. Almost all of the parkland in the Central Bench is developed.
- Because the Central Bench is largely built out, opportunities are limited for adding any new parks.

Schools

- There are 14 schools in the Central Bench. Bishop Kelly and Borah High Schools, South Junior High, ten elementary schools, and Boise Christian School.
- School enrollment in the Central Bench has been declining.

Schools

There are 14 schools in the Central Bench. In addition to the educational significance of these facilities, several Central Bench schools are historically significant and contribute to the overall character of the neighborhood.

High Schools

- **Bishop Kelly High School** is located on the south side of Franklin Road just east of Cole Road. In the 1930's, Bishop Edward Joseph Kelly dreamed of establishing a Catholic high school under the direction of the Catholic Diocese of Boise. In 1964, that dream became a reality when Bishop Kelly High School opened its doors in the fall of 1964. Bishop Kelly is Boise's only accredited private High School and is home to approximately 600 students.
- **Borah High School** is located on the south side of Cassia Street just west of Curtis Road, and opened in 1958. In the 2007-2008 school year, 1,509 students enrolled.

Junior High

- **South Junior High** is located on the southwest corner of Cassia Street and Shoshone Street and has approximately 685 students that attend the school each year. Construction on the original building was completed in 1948 and the school campus more than doubled over the years. In 2008, the original building was torn down and the new South Junior High School was relocated into a new, spacious and modern building on the same site. The Art Deco section of the library wall of the original building has been preserved and will become a portion of an amphitheater/interpretive plaza.

Elementary Schools

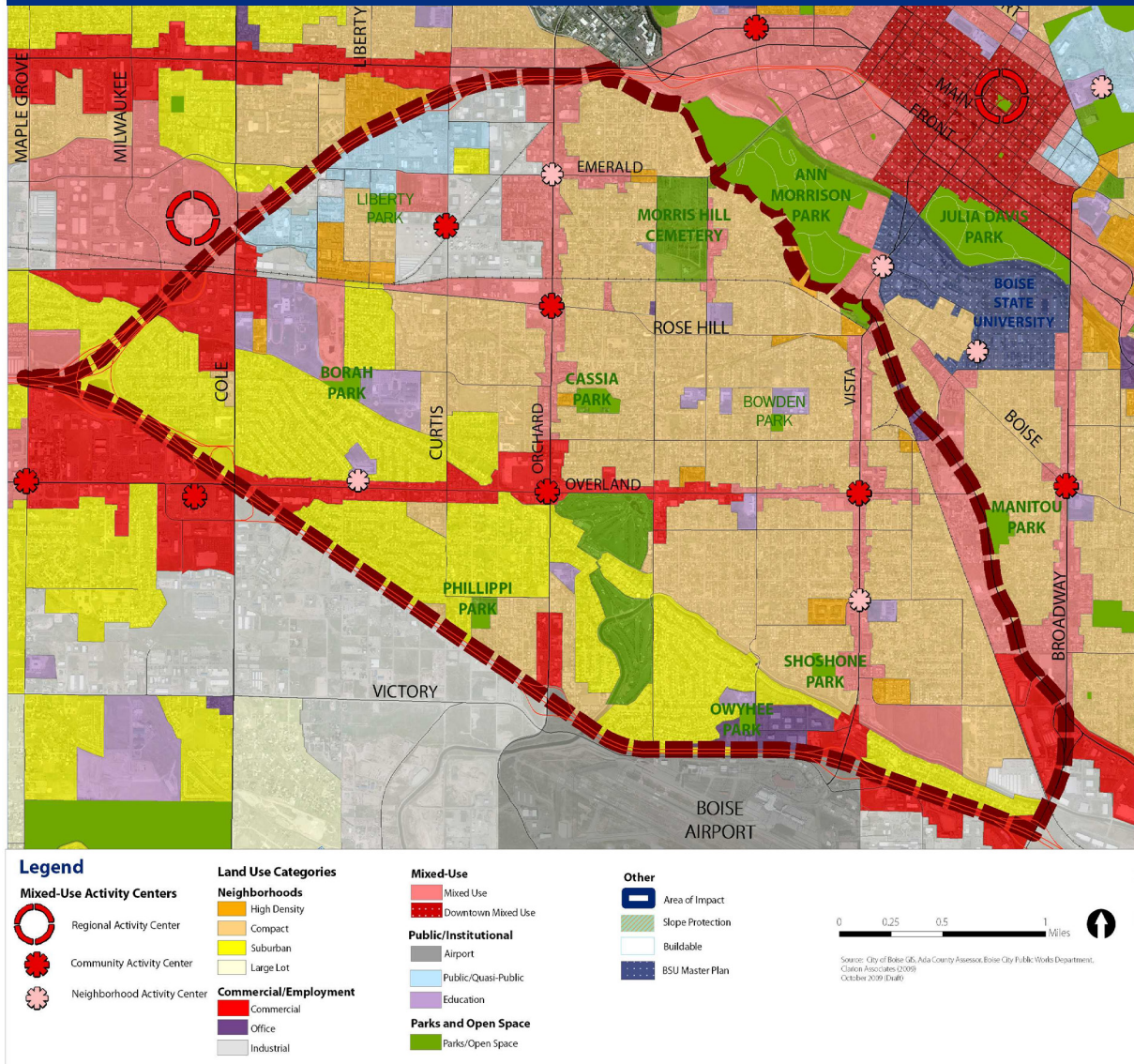
- **Jefferson Elementary** is located on the east side of Latah Street between Alpine Street and Rose Hill Road. In the 2009 school year, there were 350 children enrolled. Jefferson School was constructed in 1949. Since 1949, the school has been expanded three times in order to provide for the educational needs of children within this central bench neighborhood.
- **Sacred Heart Elementary** is located on the south side of Cassia Street just east of Latah Street. Sacred Heart Catholic School holds the distinction of being an Idaho Merit School. The curriculum follows the State of Idaho guidelines and integrates a comprehensive religious education program as well. The campus can accommodate 250 students in grades pre-K through 8.
- **Franklin Elementary** was constructed in 1905 on the southwest corner of Franklin Road and Orchard Street. The building was constructed from stone acquired from a local quarry. The school bell was added in 1907. In 1949, the school was annexed into the Boise School District and transitioned from a senior high school to an elementary school. Franklin Elementary school closed in 2008 as part of a Boise School District's decision to consolidate several elementary schools into new facilities.
- **Jackson Elementary** was located on the east side of Cole Road just south of Franklin Road. Jackson Elementary closed in 2008 as part of a Boise School District's decision to consolidate several elementary schools into new facilities. During the 2007-2008 school year, Jackson Elementary educated 327 children.
- **Monroe Elementary** is located on the south side of Cassia Street just east of Latah Street. In 1954, Monroe Elementary School was constructed. The school has undergone two building projects that have added on to the original structure. Even with the two additions, Monroe Elementary School remains the smallest school in the Boise School District and has just under 300 children enrolled.

- **Grace Jordan Elementary** is one of Boise School District's newest elementary schools and is located just south of Overland Road within the Randolph Robertson Subdivision. It was opened in August 2008, bringing together approximately 550 students when the District demolished McKinley Elementary School and eliminated Franklin and Jackson Elementary Schools. Grace Jordan Elementary is one of three elementary schools within in Boise that include community centers operated by Boise Parks and Recreation.
- **Whitney Elementary** is located on the southwest corner of Overland Road and Owyhee Street. The original Whitney School was a two-story red brick building constructed in 1923. The building burned to the ground only one year later. A new Whitney School was built in 1925. In 1936 and 1946 additions to the building were constructed. In 2009, a new Whitney Elementary School was built and is what now serves the 400 children located on the Boise Bench. Whitney Elementary School is one of three elementary schools within in Boise that include community centers operated by Boise Parks and Recreation. The community center features multipurpose rooms to be used for after-school programs and also provide space for fee-based programs in performing and visual arts for children and adults.
- **Hillcrest Elementary** is located on the east side of Orchards Street between Interstate 84 and Overland Road within the Hillcrest Country Club Subdivision. Hillcrest Elementary was constructed in 1958, and expanded once.
- **Hawthorne Elementary** is located on the south side of Targee Street just east of Vista Avenue. Originally, fourteen World War Two barracks were converted to classrooms and moved onto the site. In 1956, five rooms of the permanent building were constructed and after two additions in 1961 and 1966, Hawthorne Elementary is now an 18 room school with a multipurpose room, library and office complex. During the 2007-2008 school year there were 324 children enrolled in Hawthorne Elementary.
- **Owyhee-Harbor School** is located just north of I-84 and the Boise Airport on the corner of Owyhee Street and Pasadena Street and was constructed in 1969 with two wings which were originally designed in an open classroom concept to facilitate team teaching. This school remained an open classroom school through the 2003-2004 school year. In 2004 the District decided to convert Owyhee to a Harbor School and remodeled the facility to create separate classrooms but retained a common work area at the center of each wing for individual or small group instruction as needed. Today there are 314 children enrolled in Owyhee Harbor Elementary School.
- **Boise Christian School** is a Christian-based elementary and child care program that has been in existence since 1962. The school is located on the west side of Roosevelt Street just south of Emerald Street. The schools curriculum is based on the A Beka curriculum and is accredited by the American Christian Schools International. In 2009, the elementary learning program has 30 children enrolled and the child care program had 15 children.

Sources:

COMPASS Community Choice Growth Projections, August 2007.
 2010 Census Data for Population and Households.
 COMPASS Development Monitoring Reports (2000-2007).
 ESRI Business Analyst Report, Central Bench (2009).

Central Bench Planning Area: Future Land Use Map



CENTRAL BENCH POLICIES

Centers, Corridors, and Neighborhoods (CB-CCN)

Goals and policies for this section focus on promoting the revitalization of major travel corridors and activity centers; protecting the character of established neighborhoods; ensuring that future infill and redevelopment enhances the Central Bench's livability; encouraging the identification and protection of historic resources; and identifying areas where more detailed planning will be needed in the future.

Goal CB-CCN 1: Promote the revitalization of activity centers and corridors throughout the Central Bench.

CB-CCN 1.1: DESIGNATED ACTIVITY CENTERS

Six mixed-use activity centers have been designated to serve the Central Bench to promote the availability of local services within walking distance of residential neighborhoods. They include:

- Overland and Orchard;
- Overland and Vista;
- Overland and Cole;
- Orchard and Emerald; and,
- Emerald and Curtis.

Additional activity centers may be designated in accordance with the location criteria provided in Chapter 3.

CB-CCN 1.2: ST. ALPHONSUS REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

- (a) Establish a medical/office/government campus setting in the St. Alphonsus Regional Medical Center area.
- (b) Discourage new industrial uses outside the area specifically designated for industrial uses.

CB-CCN 1.3: ORCHARD STREET CORRIDOR

- (a) Encourage a mix of small-scale, pedestrian-oriented commercial, retail, and higher-density residential uses along Orchard Street; concentrate taller building heights within activity centers.
- (b) Promote the rehabilitation of existing strip centers through façade and landscape enhancement and the assemblage of smaller parcels to accommodate larger redevelopment opportunities.

- (c) Encourage new development that complements the character of the corridor and its role as a major gateway into Downtown from the Boise Airport.



Recent development as part of ongoing efforts to revitalize the Orchard Street Corridor.

CB-CCN 1.4: OVERLAND ROAD CORRIDOR

- (a) Encourage a mix of small-scale (one to three stories) pedestrian-oriented, mixed use development along Overland Road, particularly between Vista and Federal Way.
- (b) Promote the rehabilitation of existing strip centers façade and landscape enhancements and the assemblage of smaller parcels to accommodate larger redevelopment opportunities where feasible.
- (c) Place the highest priority on revitalization efforts for the Overland/Orchard activity center and areas west of Orchard due to limitations east of Orchard.

CB-CCN 1.5: VISTA AVENUE CORRIDOR

- (a) Encourage a mix of small-scale (one to three stories) pedestrian-oriented commercial, retail, and higher-density residential uses along Vista Avenue.

(b) Promote the rehabilitation of existing strip centers through façade and landscape enhancement and the conversion of existing single-family homes to offices and businesses.

(c) Promote the assemblage of smaller parcels to accommodate larger redevelopment opportunities where feasible.

(d) Encourage new development that complements the character of the corridor and its role as a major gateway into Downtown from the Boise Airport.



The rehabilitation of existing strip centers through façade and landscape enhancements is encouraged.

CB-CCN 1.6: BSU/ANN MORRISON PARK AREA

Encourage higher-density housing, in conjunction with supporting retail services between Capitol Boulevard and Ann Morrison Park to increase housing opportunities for BSU students and downtown employees.

CB-CCN 1.7: CURTIS AND EMERALD

Encourage the redevelopment of the southwest corner of Emerald and Curtis with a mix of uses to support pedestrian movement and the use of transit in site design and building placement. Incorporate a local roadway network in the redevelopment of the site to ensure connection to the existing street system.

CB-CCN 1.8: AIRPORT RELATED USES

Support airport-related accessory uses north and west of the Vista/I-84 interchange (south of the New York Canal).

Goal CB-CCN 2: Conduct detailed planning for opportunity areas as appropriate.

Goal CB-CCN 2: Conduct detailed planning for opportunity areas as appropriate

CB-CCN 2.1: TANK FARM AREA

Explore opportunities for the redevelopment of the tank farm located in the Morris Hill area as a high-density, mixed-use area through the Specific Plan process. The process should:

- Focus on the area between Orchard, I-84, and adjacent to the rail corridor;
- Include input from Central Bench residents and businesses and property owners in the immediate vicinity; and
- Evaluate alternative Land Use designations for the area; and
- Seek alternative state or federal funding to expedite relocation.

Goal CB-CCN 3: The Central Bench will continue to provide a diverse mix of housing for the community.

CB-CCN 3.1: NEIGHBORHOOD PLANS

Consider neighborhood plans in conjunction with the goals and policies contained in this Comprehensive Plan when reviewing proposed development submittals.

CB-CCN 3.2: MIX OF HOUSING TYPES

Encourage a mix of housing types, lot sizes, and price points in the Central Bench, in accordance with the policies contained in this chapter, to maintain the area's diverse character.

CB-CCN 3.3: HIGH DENSITY NEIGHBORHOODS

(a) High density neighborhoods in the Central Bench, as identified on the Future Land Use Map, are intended to accommodate pockets of housing adjacent to mixed-use activity centers and corridors where residents may easily access services and transit.

(b) Encourage infill development in these locations that is consistent with the design principles contained in this Comprehensive Plan to ensure appropriate transitions are provided to surrounding established neighborhoods.

CB-CCN 3.4: COMPACT NEIGHBORHOODS

(a) Compact neighborhoods in the Central Bench, as identified on the Future Land Use Map, are intended to remain functionally and stylistically diverse in the character of homes and type of homes that exist.



Infill development increases the variety of housing available within walking distance of transit and other services.

(b) Infill development is anticipated to continue throughout the Central Bench's compact neighborhoods; but will be focused in areas identified as Level 2 on the Areas of Change and Areas of Stability Map for the Central Bench, located in Appendix C.

(c) Encourage infill development in these locations that is consistent with the design principles contained in this Comprehensive Plan to ensure compatibility with surrounding homes.

(d) Consider limits on overall lot coverage for infill development to reserve the integrity of the area's larger lot sizes.



Many homes in the Central Bench feature larger lot sizes and mature vegetation, adding to the area's more open character.

CB-CCN 3.5: SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOODS

(a) Suburban neighborhoods in the Central Bench, as identified on the Future Land Use Map are anticipated to remain largely single-family in character, with the exception of areas just west of Orchard, which are anticipated to see some infill and redevelopment.

(b) Ensure that infill and redevelopment that occurs west of Orchard is consistent with the design principles contained in this Comprehensive Plan and provides appropriate transitions to promote compatibility with the single-family character of neighborhoods to the west.

CENTRAL BENCH POLICIES

Connectivity (CB-C)

Goals and policies for connectivity focus on identifying and implementing improvements that will enhance the ease and safety of multi-modal travel in the Central Bench.

Goal CB-C1: Provide a safe-environment for walking and bicycling.

CB-C 1.1: STREET IMPROVEMENTS

Continue to identify and implement targeted improvements to sidewalks, bike lanes, curb and gutter, street lights, and other infrastructure in existing areas and as infill and redevelopment occur, particularly along the Overland Road, Emerald and Orchard Street corridors.



Improvements to pedestrian facilities and other infrastructure in the Central Bench, such as these sidewalks along Overland, should be implemented as infill and redevelopment occur.

CB-C 1.2: GREENBELT AND TRAIL EXPANSION

- (a) Extend the Greenbelt west of Orchard to provide a connection to the Boise Towne Square Mall and to expand biking opportunities to and from the Central Bench.
- (b) Continue to expand the network of trails and bike paths within the Central Bench, exploring opportunities for trails that parallel the canals.



Expansion of the Greenbelt is needed to increase connections between the Central Bench and other areas of the community.

CB-C 1.3: GREENBELT SIGNAGE/ACCESS

- (a) Establish wayfinding signage to direct pedestrians and bicyclists to the Greenbelt.
- (b) Explore the feasibility of a park and ride lot at Garden Street and the Greenbelt to increase access from other areas of the community.

CB-C 1.4: BOISE CENTRAL BENCH NEIGHBORHOOD PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE PLAN

Implement the recommendations of the Central Bench Neighborhood Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan.

CENTRAL BENCH POLICIES

Public Services and Facilities (CB-PSF)

Goals and policies for this section focus on identifying areas where investment in infrastructure are needed in the Central Bench to implement the community's vision.

Goal CB-PSF 1: Upgrade existing infrastructure to meet future demands of infill and redevelopment.



Basic infrastructure improvements, such as these pedestrian crosswalks, are needed in several areas of the Central Bench.

CB-PSF 1.1: POLICE SUBSTATION

Establish a police substation in the Central Bench as infill development activity increases and population density warrants.

CB-PSF 1.2: COMMUNITY CENTERS

Explore opportunities to partner with the school district to establish community centers in the Vista/Cherry Lane area.



Facilities such as the Morley Nelson Community Center, pictured above, provide places for Central Bench residents to recreate and gather.

CENTRAL BENCH POLICIES

Neighborhood Character (CB-NC)

Goals and policies for neighborhood character focus on attributes and activities that contribute to the overall character and livability of the Central Bench's neighborhoods, including open space and recreation, public art, and historic and design review areas.

Goal CB-NC 1: Maintain current level of service for neighborhood parks and trails.



Many Central Bench residents take advantage of the area's numerous park facilities.

CB-NC 1.1: NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

- (a) Identify and plan for new neighborhood parks in areas where an increase in density is planned or has occurred over time.
- (b) Consider sites smaller than current minimum park standards as a way of accommodating pocket parks, dog parks, and other amenities within this established neighborhood.

CB-NC 1.2: POCKET PARKS

Incorporate pocket parks and other small-scale amenities in mixed-use activity centers to reduce impacts on existing park facilities as density increases over time.

Goal CB-NC2: Protect character-defining neighborhood features.

CB-NC 2.1: CONSERVATION AND HISTORIC DISTRICTS

- (a) Identify areas of historically significant or otherwise unique architecture in the Central Bench.
- (b) Establish protective regulations, such as conservation districts, as appropriate.

CB-NC 2.2: TREE PRESERVATION

Encourage the retention of mature trees as infill and redevelopment occurs over time.



Mature trees and historic homes contribute to the character of the Central Bench's neighborhoods.

CENTRAL BENCH POLICIES

Related Planning Documents

There have been a number of plans and studies prepared for portions of Central Bench. These plans, along with Blueprint Boise, will help guide future development in Central Bench.

Vista Neighborhood Plan (1999)

Much of the Vista Neighborhood belonged to the Whitney Township prior to annexation into the City of Boise (in 1962 and 1986). The Vista Neighborhood Plan records the history and landmarks of the area and sets forth a vision. The vision for the neighborhood is of attractive, safe and well-maintained residential areas that preserve older housing units, improved role and function of Vista Avenue, new parks and recreation opportunities, and additional mobility and transportation choices, including good public transit as well as bike- and pedestrian-friendly routes.

Sunset Rim Neighborhood Plan (2003)

The Sunrise Rim Neighborhood is a small residential neighborhood that is sandwiched between the airport; the freeway, and a deep barrier canal. There is very little land that is suitable for development. The consensus among residents is to preserve and enhance the residential quality of the neighborhood and to promote a safe, appealing environment in which to live. The plan seeks to promote a safe, quiet, pedestrian friendly residential area; free of business ventures; promoting a quality and pleasing visual appearance with the most up to date conveniences. In the commercial area, the plan encourages continuation of the existing business pattern be continued, and that new businesses not be major traffic generators or have visual impacts such as signs.

Central Rim Neighborhood Plan (2004)

The Central Rim Neighborhood is a small enclave on the Boise Bench notable for outstanding valley and mountain views, diversity of homes, tree-lined streets, and families. The purpose of the Central Rim Neighborhood Plan is to ensure that commercial and residential development and regional transportation improvements enhance rather than jeopardize its livability. The vision is of: A revitalized neighborhood with viable, community-based local businesses; safe pathways for people to walk; a mix of well-maintained housing; free of debris with good curbside appeal; a strong identity and known for its safety.

Depot Bench Neighborhood Plan (2007)

The Depot Bench Neighborhood is bounded by Federal Way, Overland Road, Roosevelt Street, and Crescent Rim. The neighborhood is distinctive, has a diverse population, and includes families who have lived in the area for several generations. Key features include city treasures such as the Boise Depot, Ahaveth Beth Israel and Morris Hill Cemetery; one of the city's densest tree canopies, small neighborhood schools, varied housing styles, distinctive canals and a commanding view of the Boise skyline from its northern-most boundary. The goals of the plan include: protecting the neighborhood's unique character, supporting development that is compatible with the character of the existing neighborhood, and maintaining an attractive, stable, and close-knit neighborhood. The Depot Bench Plan articulates its vision and includes a guide to desired long-term land use, transportation, and community design.

Central Bench Neighborhood Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan (2012)

The Ada County Highway District prepared a detailed plan for the development of a connected system of pedestrian and bicycle facilities for the Central Bench Planning Area. The objectives of the plan include: people can conveniently walk or bike to their destinations, people feel safe walking and biking, facilities are provided for people from all age groups, people with disabilities are more easily mobile, and visitors are attracted to the enhanced walking and bicycling environment.

