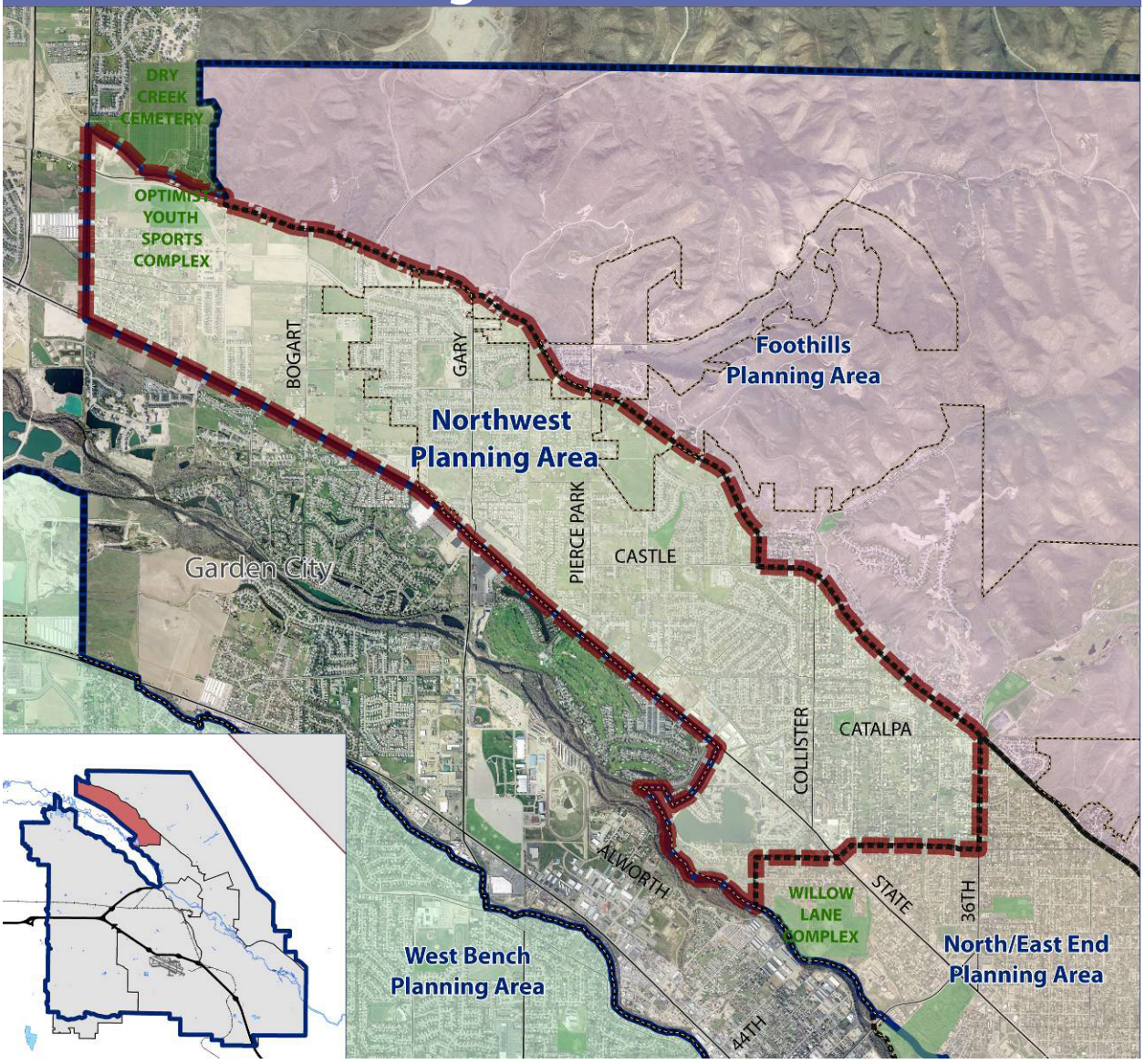
Northwest Planning Area



Location and Context

The Northwest Planning Area ("Northwest") extends from north of the Boise River and State Street to Hill Road, and west from 36th Street to Horseshoe Bend Road along the State Street Corridor. State Street is the most recognized local feature of the Northwest. Only two river crossings, Glenwood Street and Veterans Memorial Parkway, enable north/south travel and State Street serves as a major east/west commuter corridor.

Land use in the Northwest is principally residential with strip commercial along the arterials. Remnants of rural larger lot residential land with pastures and small scale urban farms remain. The Northwest also includes a major recreation park, Optimist Park. The extension of public sewer has resulted in subdivision development between Gary Lane and Bogart Lane. In the Collister neighborhood, infill has occurred through combination of small lot development and some subdivisions.



TRENDS AND KEY ISSUES

Utilities

- The Northwest has sewer service available, but some pockets in the far northwest do not have sewer service,; however, there are current plans for extensions.
- Floodplains are located along the Boise River within the Northwest.

Transportation

- More than half of Northwest workers commute to jobs elsewhere in the community. The average commute time for a Northwest worker in 2000 was 19.5 minutes.
- State Street is the major transportation corridor in the Northwest carrying through traffic from the Foothills, Eagle, and areas west. A bus rapid transit route is planned along State Street. The Northwest is currently served by public bus route #9 and #10.
- Development in the northwest areas of Ada County and the City of Eagle has resulted in increased travel along Hill Road and State Street. Both of these corridors currently operate at Level of Service F during the peak hour.

Development Constraints

- There are remnant pastures in the Northwest planning area that could be preserved for their small scale urban agricultural characteristics.

Demographic Profile

Population

Population: In 2010, the population of the Northwest was 14,405.

Median Age: Northwest residents are slightly older (35.7) than Boise residents overall.

Housing

Total Households: In 2010, the Northwest was home to 6,253 households. This accounts for 6.6 percent of Boise households.

Household Composition: The Northwest is somewhat more affordable for young families and seniors, who make up higher percentages of Northwest population than of all Boise. For example, 26.9 percent of Northwest residents fall under the age of 20.

Median Home Value: Median home value in the Northwest is slightly lower ($192,512) than in Boise as a whole.

Tenancy: Most Northwest residents own their homes (71.4%). Northwest renters represent 26.9 percent of all households.

Income

Median Household Income: In 2009, median household income for the Northwest residents was $66,607.

Employment

Jobs: Just over two percent (3,306) of Boise jobs are located in the Northwest.

Workforce: Northwest workers represent 6.7 percent of the Boise workforce.

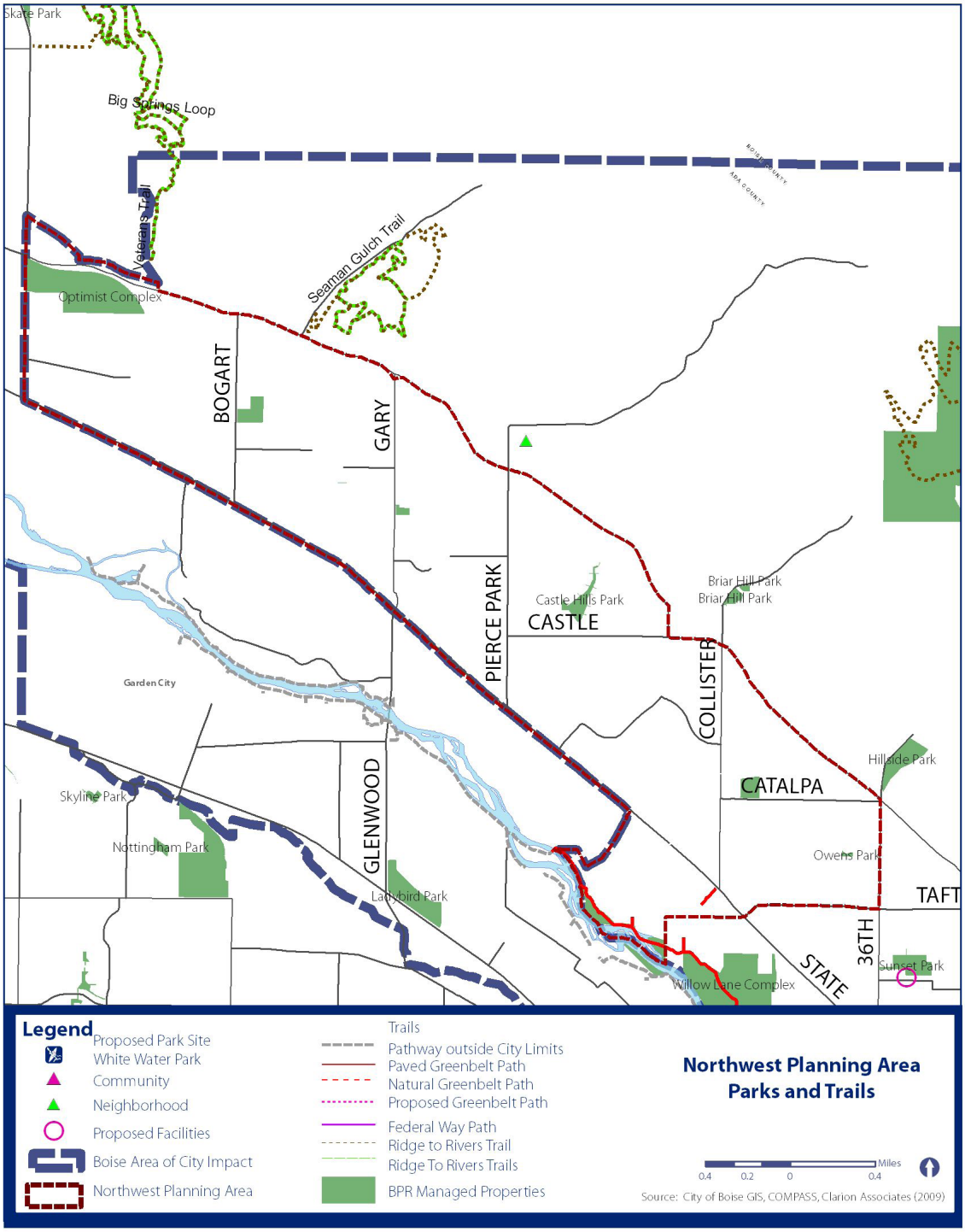
Land Use Characteristics

Existing Land Use

- The Northwest is the city's second smallest planning area. It contains 2,286 acres, making up almost 3.5 percent of Boise's total acreage.
- Single-family residential uses occupy just over 60 percent of the Northwest (1397 acres.) Multi-family residential uses occupy just 4 percent of the land area (92 acres). Most of the multi-family residential uses are proximate to the State Street corridor.
- Approximately 10 percent of the land within the Northwest (228.6 acres) is currently vacant.
- The Northwest Planning Area is home to the Collister Library!
- There are remnant pasture lands and parks that each occupy 7 percent of the land within the Northwest at 166 acres and 160 acres, respectively.
- Commercial, office, and industrial uses are limited within the Northwest, occupying 120 acres, 19 acres, and 4 acres, respectively. Combined, they occupy just 6 percent of the Northwest as a whole. Commercial and office developments are found along State Street. The Lake Harbor planned unit development on the south side of State Street is located in the Northwest.

Parks and Recreation

The Northwest includes neighborhood parks and one large urban park, the 51 acre Optimist Youth Sports Complex. The park features sports fields, open play areas, public art, and a fishing pond. Residents in the Northwest have close access to outdoor recreation opportunities in the Boise Foothills.





TRENDS AND KEY ISSUES

Parks and Recreation

- The pond at the Optimist Youth Sports Complex is stocked with fish by the Idaho FGD, and can be enjoyed by youth on a catch and release basis.
- Recreational connections to the Foothills are important for Northwest residents. Access to the Foothills is provided by Seamans Gulch Road, Collister Road, Pierce Park Road, and 36th Street.

Schools

- The Northwest has a higher proportion of school-age children than is found citywide.
- There are five schools in the Northwest: Shadow Hills Elementary, Cynthia Mann Elementary, Collister Elementary, Pierce Park School, and River Glen Junior High.

Schools

There are five schools in the Northwest. In addition to the educational significance of these facilities, two of the Northwest's schools are historically significant and contribute to the overall character of the neighborhood.

Junior High Schools

- **River Glen Junior High** is located at the base of the foothills in the Northwest, on the west side of Gary Lane south of Hill Road. The school was dedicated as the eighth and newest junior high school of the Boise School District on September 18, 1998. Total enrollment is 753 students in grades 7th through 9th.

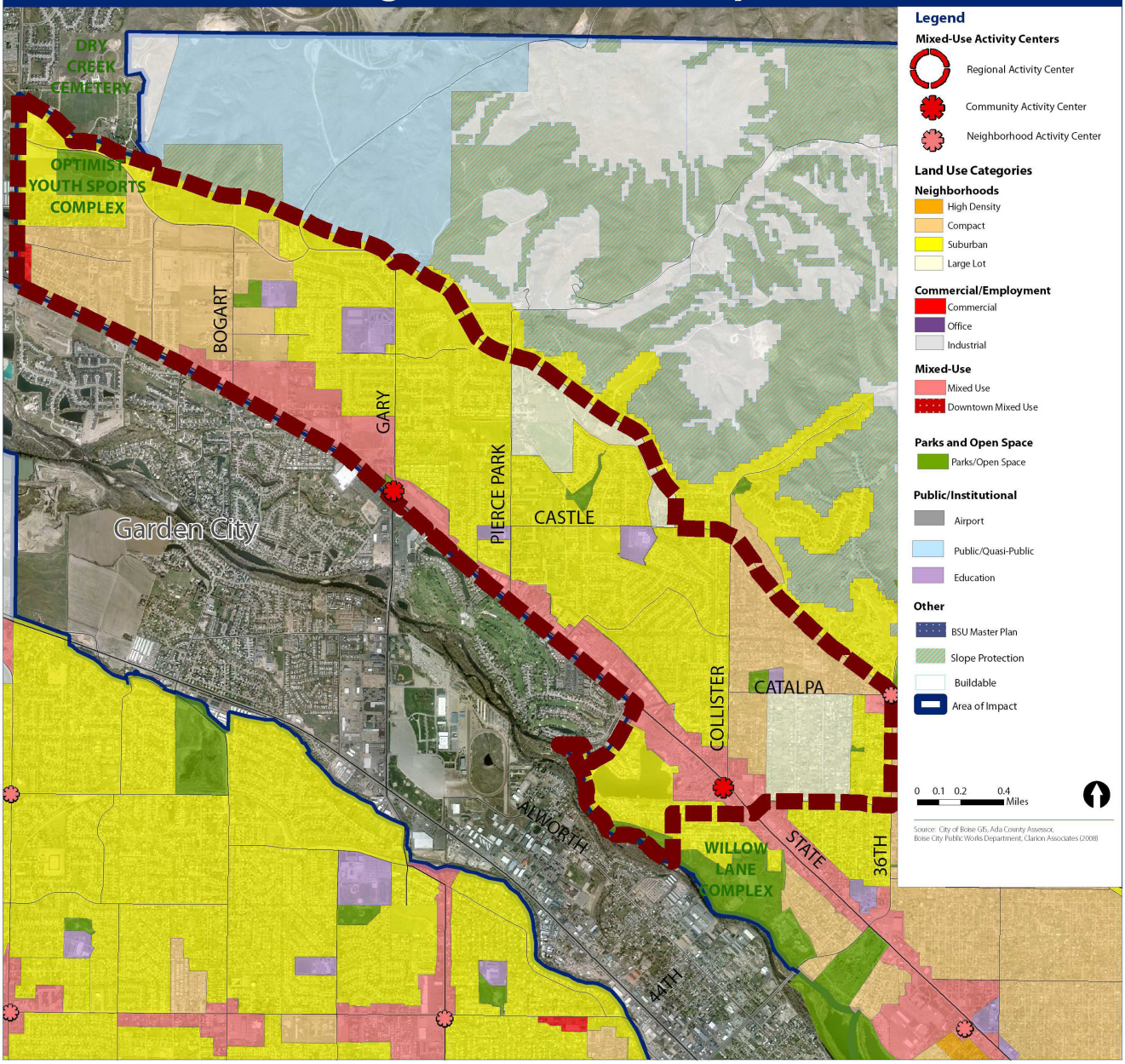
Elementary Schools

- **Shadow Hills Elementary** opened for students for the first time on August 11, 1997. It is located southeast of the intersection of Bogart Road and Hill Road Parkway and serves students from Kindergarten through Sixth grade. The total enrollment is 650 students.
- **Cynthia Mann Elementary** is located on the south side of Castle Drive, approximately two miles east of Pierce Park Elementary. The school was opened in 1990 and is named for Cynthia Mann who was a pioneer teacher who taught in the Boise area for 40 years. Total enrollment is 585 students in grades Kindergarten through 6th.
- **Collister Elementary** was built as a four room brick building in 1912 on land donated by Dr. George Collister. The school is located on Catalpa Drive, east of the intersection with Collister Drive. Total enrollment is 218 students in grades Kindergarten through 6th.
- **Pierce Park School** stands today where it has since its opening, on the west side of Pierce Park Lane near the intersection with Castle Drive. The land was acquired from W. E. Pierce in 1911 for $1.00. The building was completed in October, 1911, with school beginning in early November. The conditions of the agreement stated that the land must be continuously used for a school, without one year's lack of use. If the agreement was violated, the land reverted to the heirs of W. E. Pierce. The total enrollment is 221 students in grades Kindergarten through 6th.

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, Northwest Planning Area (2009).

Northwest Planning Area: Future Land Use Map



NORTHWEST POLICIES

Centers, Corridors, and Neighborhoods (NW-CCN)

Goals and policies for this section focus on promoting the revitalization of major travel corridors and activity centers; ensuring the scale of future infill and redevelopment is compatible with the Northwest's varied character; and identifying areas where more detailed planning will be needed in the future.

Goal NW-CCN1: Accommodate a range of uses and development characters to serve the Northwest.

NW-CCN 1.1: ACTIVITY CENTERS

Encourage mixed-use transit supportive densities in and around the intersections of activity centers located at:

- Glenwood and State Street
- 36th and Hill Road
- Collister and State Street
- Horseshoe Bend Road / State Highway 44 (State St)

Additional activity centers may be designated in accordance with the location criteria provided in Chapter 5.



Redevelopment along the State Street Corridor.

NW-CCN 1.2: STATE STREET CORRIDOR

(a) Designate areas along State Street as Transit-Oriented Development nodes consistent with the regional Long-Range Transportation Plan and the State Street Corridor Study.

(b) Encourage pedestrian-oriented mixed use development along State Street where sufficient infrastructure exists or is planned.

(c) Encourage the rehabilitation of existing strip centers through façade and landscape enhancement.



Façade and landscape enhancements were used to revamp this strip center on State Street.

(d) Support the assemblage of smaller parcels to accommodate larger redevelopment opportunities where feasible.

(e) Encourage a range of economic development opportunities from small scale retail to office uses that will complement existing services available on State Street.

(f) Implement the State Street Transit and Traffic Operational Plan and the State Street Corridor Transit Oriented Development Plan to achieve the land use, roadway and transit vision for the State Street Corridor.

NW-CCN 1.3 NEIGHBORHOODS

A mix of housing types and lot sizes will be encouraged in the Northwest to maintain the area's diverse character.

NORTHWEST POLICIES

Connectivity (NW-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 Northwest.

Goal NW-C1: Continue to enhance bicycle and pedestrian connectivity throughout the Northwest.

NW-C 1.1: NORTH/SOUTH TRAIL CONNECTION

Link the Foothills with the Boise River by creating a north/south pedestrian/bike path in the Northwest between Bogart Lane and Highway 55.

NW-C 1.2: BIKE/PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

Promote safe and efficient pedestrian circulation throughout the Northwest with particular emphasis on bike/pedestrian facilities connecting surrounding areas to State Street.

NW-C 1.3: PEDESTRIAN/ VEHICULAR CONNECTIONS

Ensure new commercial and residential developments provide connections to adjacent properties to promote movement between neighborhoods.



Improving bicycle and pedestrian connectivity should be an important consideration for future development in the Northwest.

Goal NW-C2: Facilitate the expansion of transit facilities.

NW-C 2.1: INTEGRATION OF TRANSIT FACILITIES

Integrate current and future transit service into the layout of new development along major corridors and near activity centers.

NW-C 2.2: STATE AND GLENWOOD STREET ACTIVITY CENTER

Integrate mass transit facilities with the opportunity for future expansion into the activity center at State Street and Glenwood Street.

Goal NW-C3: Maintain the efficiency of the Northwest's roadway network.

NW-C 3.1: ON-STREET PARKING STANDARDS

Maintain on-street parking in the Northwest.

NW-C 3.2: STATE STREET ACCESS

Limit direct lot access for new development without encouraging increased traffic on side streets.

NW-C 3.3: STREET CLASSIFICATIONS

Discourage upgrading of local streets and collectors to higher classifications to accommodate development in the Foothills.

NORTHWEST POLICIES

Public Services/Facilities (NW-PSF)

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

Goal NW-PSF1: Maintain existing public facilities and services and expand as needed to serve existing and future Northwest residents.

NW-PSF 1.1: FIRE STATIONS

Update the Fire Station Siting Plan when new station sites are identified. Continue cooperative efforts with the North Ada County Fire District to provide mutual aid in the Northwest

NW-PSF 1.2: NEW PUBLIC SERVICES

Locate new public facilities and services in activity centers, in proximity to transit.

NW-PSF 1.3: TRANSIT STOPS

Support the improvement of existing transit stops. Ensure all transit stops are connected to sidewalks or other pedestrian facilities.

NORTHWEST POLICIES

Neighborhood Character (NW-NC)

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

Goal NW-NC1: Maintain and enhance the livability of the Northwest.

NW-NC 1.1: PARK FACILITIES

Emphasize the development of public park facilities and preservation of existing facilities.

NW-NC 1.2: PUBLIC RECREATION FACILITIES

Provide connectivity to recreation facilities from new development and redeveloping sites within the Northwest.



Pockets of agricultural land, such as this community garden, are found throughout the Northwest.

NW-NC 1.3: URBAN AGRICULTURAL LANDS

Support the retention of urban agricultural lands and activities in the Northwest.



Rural character of the Sycamore area.

NW-NC 1.4: SYCAMORE NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

Retain the rural character of the Sycamore area through the implementation of the Sycamore Neighborhood Plan.

NW-NC 1.5: NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING

Work with residents to develop a neighborhood plan for the northwest corner of the Northwest Utahna/ Bogart Lane area to identify an appropriate mix of land uses and bike and pedestrian connections.

NW-NC 1.6: NORTH WEST NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

Recognize the North West Neighborhood Plan as the vision for growth and development in the North West Neighborhood. The Plan emphasizes the imperative to consider and retain open space and the natural environment as fundamental to the strength, shape, and context of the neighborhood, and to retain the cultural context of the Northwest area by identifying, preserving, and commemorating local history, natural assets, and heritage. The North West Plan identifies five goals, along with strategies and actions, to further the Neighborhood Vision and lists desired characteristics and features for new development or redevelopment.

NORTHWEST POLICIES

Related Planning Documents

There are three Neighborhood Plans and two corridor plans prepared for portions of the Northwest. This plan, along with Blueprint Boise, will help guide future development in the Northwest.

North West Neighborhood Plan (2020)

The North West Neighborhood Plan culminates a 13-month public planning effort to create a plan addressing current and future growth and the design of that growth in the North West Neighborhood. The Plan's actions center on maintaining open space, trails and aspects of the neighborhood's agricultural heritage as change and development occur. Retaining the cultural context of the neighborhood is a strong component of the Plan. The North West Neighborhood Plan presents principles to promote building and site design that fit into the context of the neighborhood and the Plan emphasizes the importance of retaining neighborhood characteristics that make it a desirable place to live. The Plan supports Transit Oriented Development along the State Street Corridor with design features and connectivity that complement the structure and fabric of adjacent neighborhoods.

Collister Neighborhood Plan (2007)

The Collister Neighborhood Association is bound on the north by the Boise City Impact Area boundary, on the east by 36th Street, on the west by Pierce Park Lane north to Seaman's Gulch and on the south by State Street. Portions of Collister are located in the Northwest, while the majority is in Foothills. The Collister Neighborhood Plan establishes a vision and goals to guide new development in the area and provide a basis for determining development review decisions. The eight main goals of the plan relate to provision and use of utilities, the natural environment, open space and recreation facilities, mobility and transportation, quality of life, youth, social and economic health and sustainability, commercial development, and alternative transportation networks.

State Street Corridor Transit Oriented Development Plan (2019)

The State Street Corridor Transit Oriented Development Plan provides analysis, background and recommendations for the expansion of Valley Regional Transit service to include bus rapid transit on the State Street/SH 44 corridor, and design sketches, policy and zoning recommendations for four TOD transit stations on State Street at Whitewater Park Boulevard, Collister Road, Gary Lane/Glenwood Streets, and Horseshoe Bend Road. The State Street TOD Plan offers a guideline for developers, investors, residents, policy makers and the City team to understand and implement the vision of mixed-use, high quality development necessary to achieve high capacity transit, and to assist the region in addressing transportation, housing, and employment challenges on the State Street corridor. Designs for transit stations and development types at each TOD node translate the transit corridor vision into graphics easily understandable to stakeholders and the general public.

State Street Transit and Traffic Operational Plan (2011)

The State Street Transit and Traffic Operational Plan details the near, medium-and-long-term improvements to achieve the high capacity transit vision on State Street.

Sycamore Neighborhood Plan (1998)

The Sycamore neighborhood is bounded by Sycamore Street to the west, Catalpa Drive to the north, Taft Street to the south, and the lots on the east side of Tamarack Drive. The area originally developed in the 1940's into large lots to allow room for large gardens. The area still retains agricultural land uses and is subject to a zoning overlay district to protect its unique character.