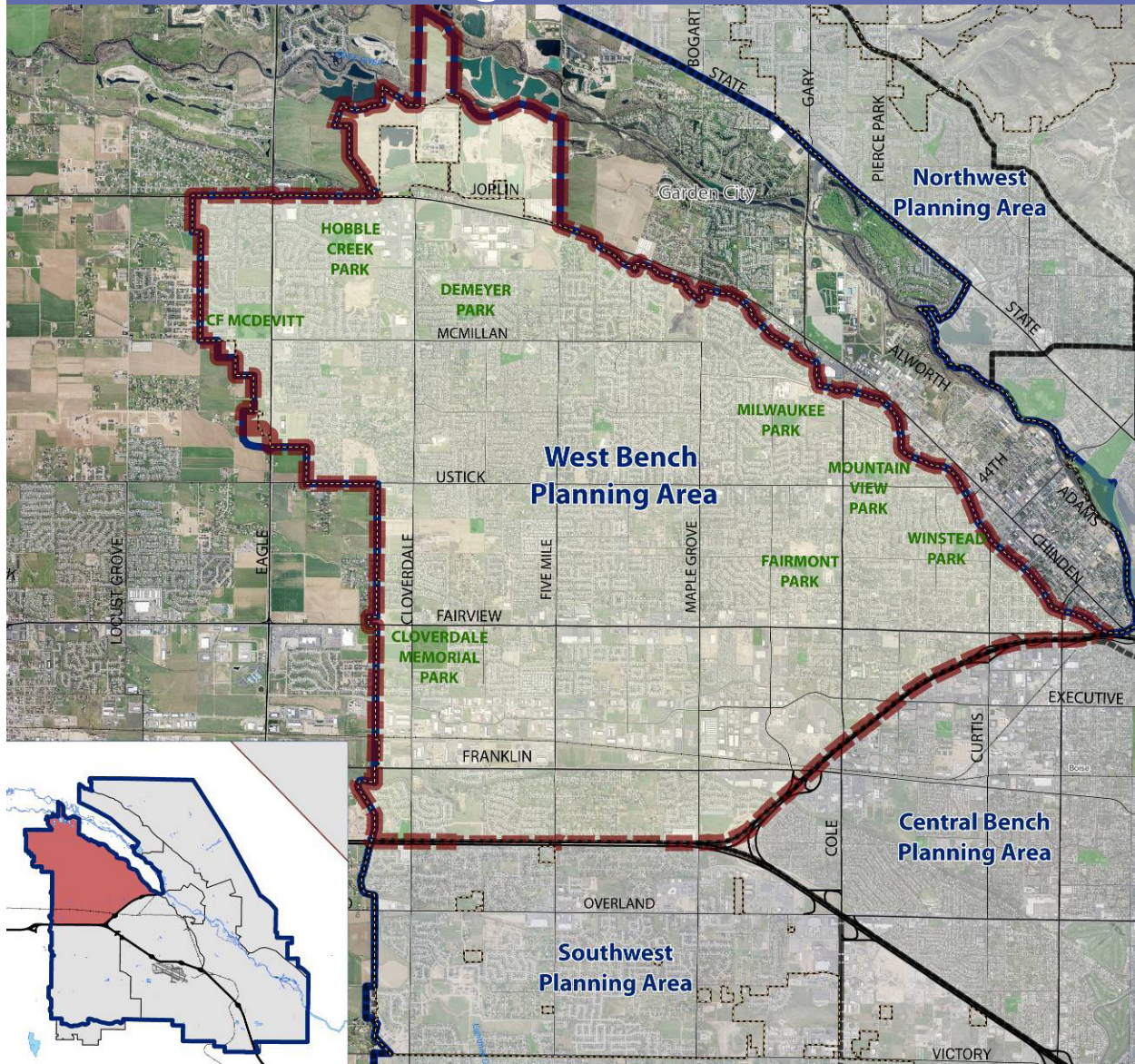


West Bench Planning Area



Location and Context

The West Bench Planning Area ("West Bench") has a balanced mix of employment centers, retail and commercial services, and neighborhoods. The West Bench has seen some of the most intense growth since 2000 of any planning area, with over 21 percent of all new residential units and just under 25 percent of non-residential construction citywide. The West Bench is adjacent to three other cities; Garden City, Meridian, and Eagle.

The area between Interstate 1-84, Emerald and Maple Grove is designated as a mixed use district, as are several smaller areas in the West Bench. Boise Towne Square Mall offers retail, food and entertainment opportunities and the surrounding commercial district provides a regional supply of goods and services. A large industrial area is located north of Franklin Boulevard. Several arterial corridors have developed into strip commercial areas, such as Fairview and Cole Roads. These diminish in the northwest portion of the West Bench, where residential neighborhoods are the dominant land use.



TRENDS AND KEY ISSUES

Growth Trends

- Over 29 percent (69,975) of Boise residents live in the West Bench in 2010. This number is projected to increase to 82,618 by 2025.
- Several areas in the West Bench have been designated for redevelopment as mixed use districts.

Building Permit Activity

- The West Bench had 35 percent of all new multifamily units and 19 percent of new single family units constructed in Boise between 2000 and 2006.
- Nearly 3 million square feet of new non-residential building area was added in the West Bench since 2000 – the most in any Boise planning area.

Employment

- West Bench jobs are projected to increase by just over 20 percent, from 41,946 in 2005 to 50,644 in 2025.

Utilities

- The West Boise Wastewater Treatment facility is located in the far north portion of the West Bench.

Transportation

- The average commute time for a West Bench worker in 2000 was 19 minutes.
- North – south travel has improved in recent years through implementation of the Bench-Valley Transportation Plan to connect Maple Grove, Five Mile and Curtis Roads to Chinden Boulevard.

Location and Context (continued)

The West Bench's residential neighborhoods are in high demand, and infill is occurring on small parcels in this area. Additional population and job increases are expected in the West Bench in the next two decades. The area also includes a significant number of schools, in both the Boise and Meridian School Districts.

Demographic Profile

Population

Population: In 2010, the population of the West Bench was 69,975 or 29.4% of the city's total.

Median Age: West Bench residents are nearly the same age (34.6) as Boise residents overall.

Housing

Total Households: In 2010, the West Bench was home to 28,859 households. This accounts for nearly 28 percent of the households in Boise.

Household Composition: More families with children reside in the West Bench, with 29.5 percent of residents falling under the age of 20.

Median Home Value: Median home value in the West Bench (\$195,905) is just under Boise as a whole.

Tenancy: Most West Bench residents own their homes (71.8 %). West Bench renters represent just 25.6 percent of all households.

Income

Median Household Income: In 2009, median household income for West Bench residents was \$63,822.

Employment

Jobs: Over 27 percent of all Boise jobs are located in the West Bench.

Workforce: 28.4 percent of the Boise workforce lives in the West Bench.

Employers: Hewlett Packard is a major employer located in the West Bench. The Boise Research Park contains several large employers, such as DirecTV and the ITT Technical Institute.

Land Use Characteristics

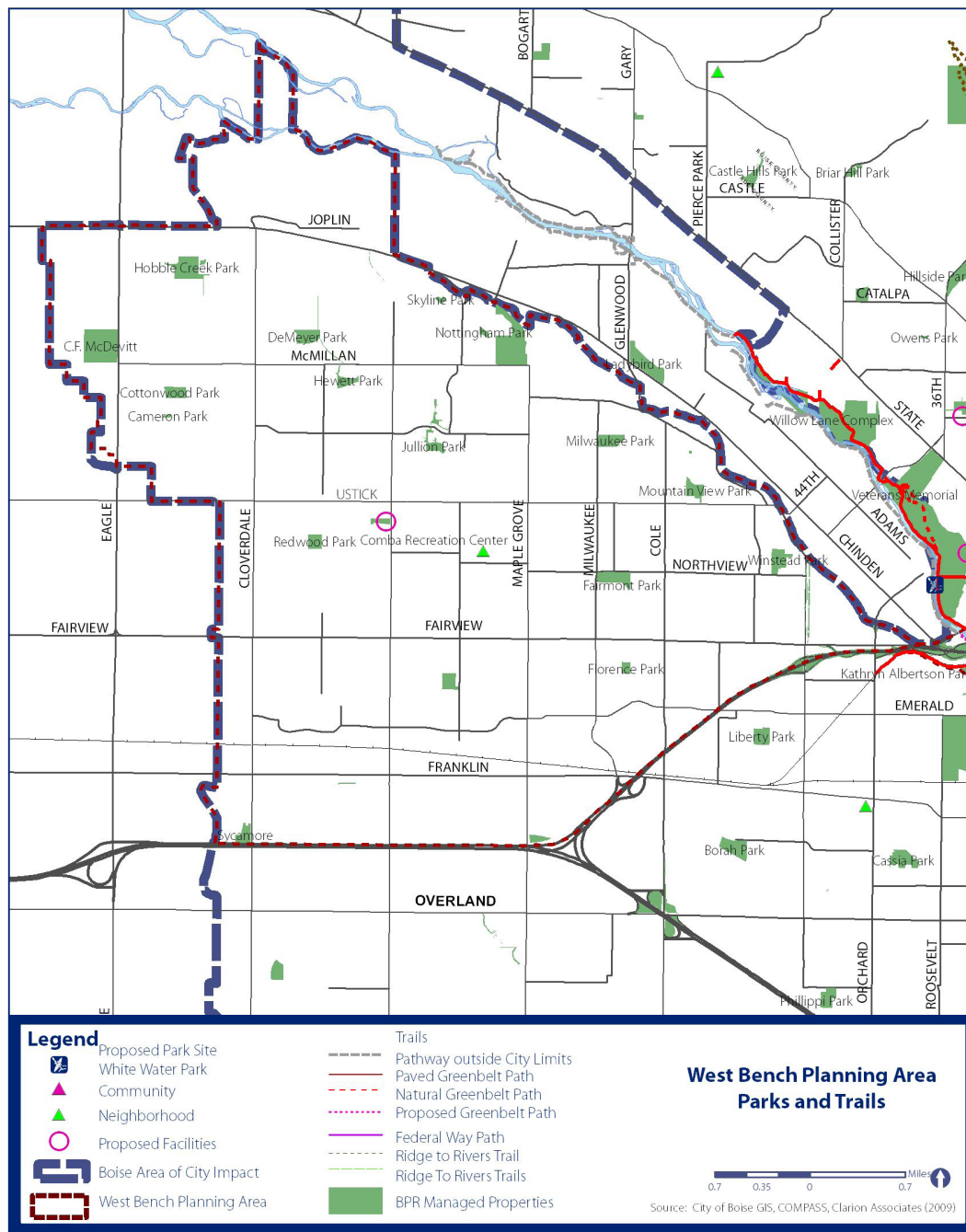
Existing Land Use

- The West Bench contains 9,762 acres, making up almost fifteen percent of Boise's total acres.
- Single-family residential uses occupy over just over half (53 percent or 5,197 acres of the West Bench's total acres.
- Multi-family residential uses in the West Bench account for nearly 40 percent (449) acres of Boise's multi-family land.
- Over 33 percent of Boise's commercial land is located in the West Bench (1,083 acres) along with 34 percent of Boise's industrial land (729 acres.)

- The West Bench is more densely developed than some areas of Boise, with more than a quarter of Boise households in about 15 percent of the land area.
- In recent years, significant infill development has occurred in the area.

Parks and Recreation

Thirteen neighborhood parks are located in the West Bench. At 44 acres, Hyatt Hidden Lakes Reserve is the largest park and includes a 22 acre wetland. Large sport-oriented parks in the West Bench include the C.F. McDewitt Youth Sports Complex and Hobbie Creek Park.





TRENDS AND KEY ISSUES

Parks and Recreation

- A variety of park facilities are currently available; however, infill and redevelopment will continue to drive a need for more parks to serve area residents.
- Hyatt Hidden Lakes Reserve provides West Bench residents and visitors with a 44 acre natural environment that is accessible to many surrounding neighborhoods.

Schools

- Children in the West Bench attend both Boise and Meridian Public School Districts. There are 21 schools in the West Bench.
- Elementary Schools include: Cecil D. Andrus, Frontier, Joplin, Pioneer, Ustick, Spalding, Summerwind, McMillan, Koelsch, Horizon, Valley View, Mountain View, Morley Nelson, Maranath Christian, Boise Valley Adventist, and Cole Christian.
- Centennial and Capital High Schools are located in the West Bench, as well as ITT Technical Institute, a private technical college.

Schools

The West Bench is home to numerous public and private schools. In addition to the educational significance of these facilities, several West Bench schools are historically significant and contribute to the overall character of the neighborhood.

High Schools

- **Centennial High School** was established in 1987. The school is a four year comprehensive public senior high school with outstanding arts and athletic programs. Enrollment for 2008 was 1951 students.
- **Capitol High School** was established in 1965. Capital High School has sustained a tradition of outstanding performance in academic achievement, activities, and athletics. Enrollment for 2008 was 1476 students

K-8 Schools

- **Maranatha Christian School** was founded in 1976 and is a private K–8 grade school affiliated with the Assembly of God Church.
- **Boise Valley Adventist School** is a private K – 8 grade school affiliated with the Seventh-Day Adventist Church.

K-6 School

- **Cole Christen Elementary** is a private K - 6 grade school and is not affiliated with any specific Christian faith denomination. The school was founded in 1972.

Elementary Schools

- **Cecil D. Andrus Elementary** is a K-5 public school in a suburban community. The school was opened in the fall of 1997 and was named in honor of the state's former governor and school advocate Cecil D. Andrus. The school offers students rigor in academics and varied opportunities to participate in community service, extra-curricular activities, and fine arts. The enrollment for the 2008 year was 592 students.
- **Frontier Elementary** is a K-5 public school and offers the following programs: Meridian Early Intervention Preschool for developmentally delayed children; PBI - Positive Behavior Intervention. Enrollment for the 2008 year was 468 students.
- **Joplin Elementary** is a public elementary school that serves students in grades K-5. Enrollment for 2008 was 390 students. The school provides innovative and current educational opportunities.
- **Pioneer Elementary School of the Arts** is a Magnet School which allows students from six area schools - Summerwind, Discovery, Ustick, Joplin, Frontier and McMillan to attend Pioneer. Enrollment for the 2008 year was 682 students. Idaho State Department of Education Standards are taught through a collaborative, inter-disciplinary approach that integrates visual arts, music and kinesthetic movement into classroom instruction.
- **Ustick Elementary School** is one of the oldest elementary schools in the School District. The original Ustick School is located approximately a mile east of the current site. That building was constructed in 1908. It is still standing and is privately owned. It was used until 1959 when the current site was developed. Enrollment for 2008 was 475 students.

- **Spalding Elementary** is a year round school that consists of five tracks running on different calendars throughout the year. 2008 enrollment was 740 students. Spalding also consists of a preschool program and challenge center. Spalding has a new audio/video lab where students can produce the announcements/news. The school has received a Micron Foundation Grant that will allow Spalding teachers to be trained on a new math instructional focus called DMT, Developing Mathematical Thinking. Teachers have implemented this process in their classrooms and continue to focus on introducing students to new strategies on how to solve math problems.
- **Summerwind Elementary School** was built in 1974. The Math and Science Academy is housed at Summerwind, which is a magnet program that includes one classroom at each grade level focusing instruction on the areas of math and science. Enrollment for 2008 was 400 students.
- **McMillan Elementary** is the Foreign Language Magnet School with Mandarin Chinese and World Cultures as the focus. Enrollment for 2008 was 382 students.
- **Koelsch Elementary** has been part of the Boise School District for over 50 years and serves a wide diversity of students from all over the world. The school also provides a Developmental Pre-School for three and four year old children. Enrollment for 2008 was 335 students.
- **Horizon School** was built in 1992. In addition to regular education classes the school offers a wide variety of programs which include gifted and talented, special education, Title I reading and math, ELL (English Language Learners), as well as an on-site day care that operates before and after school for school-aged children. Enrollment for 2008 was 675 students.
- **Valley View Elementary School's** classrooms are arranged in grade level "clusters" which are partially open with a common area in the center, making it easy for teachers to work with students in various achievement, skill, ability and subject area groups. Valley View also houses the District full-time gifted and talented classes for the Capital Area Quadrant. The "Just for Kids" day care is also available for students before and after school. Enrollment for 2008 was 485 students.
- **Mountain View** was built as a six-room school in 1958. Mountain View is one of a few Boise schools that is not on a busy thoroughfare. It is nestled in a residential area away from traffic. The school has large play areas that border a city park and neighborhood housing on all sides. Enrollment for 2008 was 400 students.
- **Morley Nelson Elementary** is a new school which includes a community center operated by Boise Park and Recreation. Enrollment for 2008 was 572 students.

ITT Technical Institute

- **ITT Technical Institute** is a private college offering technology-oriented programs. ITT Technical Institute offers Bachelor of Science and Associate of Applied Science Degrees.

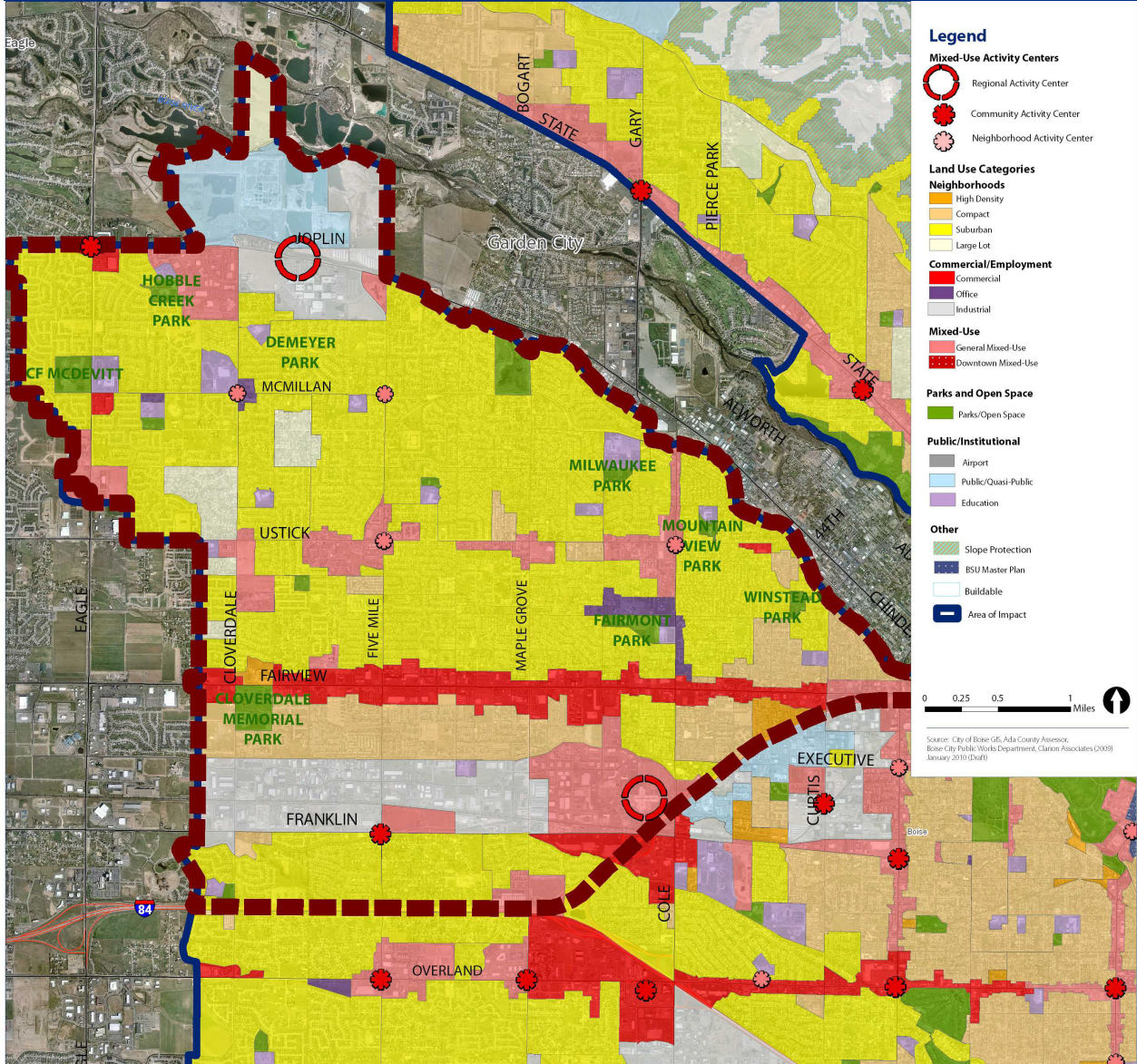
Sources:

COMPASS Community Choice Growth Projections, August 2007.

2010 Census Data for Population and Households.

COMPASS Development Monitoring Reports (2000-2007).

West Bench Planning Area: Future Land Use Map



WEST BENCH POLICIES

Centers, Corridors, and Neighborhoods (WB-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 West Bench's varied character; and identifying areas where more detailed planning will be needed in the future.

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



The rehabilitation of existing strip centers through façade, landscape, and signage enhancements is encouraged throughout the West Bench.

WB-CCN 1.1: DESIGNATED ACTIVITY CENTERS

Five mixed-use activity centers have been designated to serve the West Bench. They include:

- Franklin Road and Five Mile Road;
- Boise Towne Square Mall;
- Five Mile Road and Ustick Road;
- Hewlett Packard Industrial area; and
- Ustick Road and Cole Road;
- McMillan Road and Cloverdale Road;
- McMillan Road and Five Mile Road; Chinden Boulevard and Eagle Road.

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

WB-CCN 1.2: FAIRVIEW CORRIDOR

- (a) Encourage opportunities for higher density and mixed use development along the length of the Fairview corridor.
- (b) Collaborate with ACHD on a concept design to promote access management policies, accommodation of transit, and accommodation of regional travel needs.
- (c) Encourage the rehabilitation of existing strip centers.
- (d) Support the assemblage of smaller parcels to accommodate larger redevelopment opportunities where feasible.



Access management is a key consideration for the Fairview Corridor as infill and redevelopment occur over time.

WB-CCN 1.3: USTICK CORRIDOR

Encourage a mix of small-scale (one to three stories) pedestrian-oriented mixed use development within designated activity centers along the Ustick Corridor. Explore the feasibility of a corridor study for Ustick Road.

WB-CCN 1.4: USTICK CENTER

Promote development of the Ustick Center with mixed-use and high density residential while preserving the historic character of the West Bench.



The character of historic resources in the Ustick Center should be preserved as part of future revitalization efforts.

WB-CCN 1.5: CORRIDOR STREETSCAPES

Encourage the installation of detached sidewalks and street trees as redevelopment and street improvements occur along major travel corridors in the West Bench to improve pedestrian comfort and safety.

WB-CCN 1.6: FRANKLIN AND FIVE-MILE ACTIVITY CENTER

- (a) Concentrate transit-supportive development patterns and intensities at the Franklin and Five-Mile Activity Center to support future transit along the rail corridor.
- (b) Reevaluate opportunities for future mixed-use development along the length of the Franklin Rail Corridor following the completion of the High Capacity Rail Study.

WB-CCN 1.7 EMERALD AND CURTIS ACTIVITY CENTER

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

Goal WB-CCN 2: Reinforce the established character of the West Bench's neighborhoods.

WB-CCN 2.1: SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOODS

Suburban neighborhoods in the West Bench, as identified on the Future Land Use map are anticipated to remain largely single-family in character, with the exception of areas between Fairmont Park and Ustick, between Winstead Park and Fairview and south of Fairview, which are anticipated to see some infill and redevelopment. Should infill and redevelopment occur in these or other locations, it should be consistent with the design principles contained in this Comprehensive Plan to ensure compatibility with the single-family character of surrounding homes and adjacent neighborhoods. Considerations specific to the West Bench should include limits on overall lot coverage for infill development to protect the more open character provided by the area's larger lot sizes.

WB-CCN 2.2: COMPACT NEIGHBORHOODS

Compact neighborhoods in the West Bench, as identified on the Future Land Use map, are intended to accommodate a mix of housing types. Infill development is anticipated to be focused in areas identified as Level 2 on the Areas of Change and Areas of Stability map contained in Appendix C. Regardless of its location, infill development should be consistent with the design principles contained in this Comprehensive Plan to ensure compatibility with surrounding homes.



Compact neighborhoods can accommodate a mix of housing types.

Goal WB-CCN 3: Support the retention of regionally significant land uses in the West Bench.

WB-CCN 3.1: HEWLETT-PACKARD INDUSTRIAL AREA

Maintain a concentration of high tech industries and light manufacturing in the Hewlett Packard industrial area while allowing limited support services for employees. Ensure that the transit system provides ample ridership opportunities to the HP area.

WB-CCN 3.2: BOISE TOWNE SQUARE MALL AND MILWAUKEE AREA

Examine opportunities for workforce housing to provide housing close to the mall and spin-off businesses that can be supported by nearby residents. Examine opportunities for local transit at the mall to reduce parking and ease mall congestion.

WEST BENCH POLICIES

Connectivity (WB-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 West Bench.

Goal WB-C 1: Promote transportation choices to improve access and mobility in the West Bench.

WB-C 1.1: COMMUTER RAIL

- (a) Promote the development of commuter rail service on the existing rail corridor.
- (b) Encourage higher development densities to support future transit.

WB-C 1.2: EAGLE ROAD

Support the ITD access management policy for Eagle Road to promote increased safety and mobility.

Goal WB-C 2: Encourage greater connectivity of major roadways and pedestrian pathways within the West Bench.



A pedestrian pathway providing recreation opportunities as well as quicker routes to surrounding amenities.

WB-C 2.1: THROUGH-TRAFFIC

Pursue a variety of strategies, including regional land use and infrastructure planning and coordination, to mitigate impacts of through-traffic on West Bench residential neighborhoods.

WB-C 2.2: PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE CONNECTIVITY

Encourage greater connectivity of pedestrian walkways and bike paths between residential neighborhoods and major employment centers, public parks, plazas, and neighborhood commercial centers (i.e. Ustick Town Site).

WEST BENCH POLICIES

Public Services/Facilities (WB-PSF)

Policies for this section focus on the expansion of existing public services/facilities to meet future demand for these amenities in the West Bench.

Goal WB-PSF 1: Encourage the development of public and private facilities/services that promote the community's vision.

WB-PSF 1.1: RECREATIONAL/CULTURAL AMENITIES

Promote the expansion and development of community parks, cultural centers, plazas and public spaces to serve activity centers in the West Bench.

WB-PSF 1.2: HYATT WETLANDS

Work with adjacent neighborhood groups to implement the park master site plan for the Hyatt Wetlands.



Hyatt Wetlands.

WB-PSF 1.3: BRANCH LIBRARY

(a) Support the revitalization of commercial areas near the new branch library at Cole and Ustick Roads.

(b) Monitor the economic impact of the new branch library.



Ustick and Cole Library.

WEST BENCH POLICIES

Neighborhood Character (WB-NC)

Policies for this section focus on identifying potential opportunities for public art and design features as well as areas for recreation and open space.

Goal WB-NC 1: Enhance the character of the West Bench's neighborhoods.



Consideration of neighborhood design principles will result in new development and infill that enhances the established character of the West Bench.

WB-NC 1.1: NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Consider neighborhood design principles contained in this Comprehensive Plan when reviewing proposed development submittals to ensure new and infill development enhance, rather than detract from the area's established character.

Goal WB-NC 2: Create park space that is easily accessible to all neighborhood residents.

WB-NC 2.1: NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

Create an additional centrally-located park to keep up with neighborhood demand for accessible public amenities.



Neighborhood parks should be centrally-located to increase accessibility to residents throughout the West Bench.

Goal WB-NC 3: Support the implementation of adopted neighborhood plans.

WB-CCN 3.1: NEIGHBORHOOD PLANS

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

WB-CCN 3.2: BIG SKY NEIGHBORHOOD

Preserve the rural character of the Big Sky Neighborhood through implementation of the *Big Sky Neighborhood Plan*.

WEST BENCH POLICIES

Related Planning Documents

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

Big Sky Neighborhood Plan (2004)

The Big Sky neighborhood, developed in the 1970's, is a low density area nestled within the urban environment of Boise in the vicinity of many major Boise employers and businesses. Residents of the Big Sky neighborhood enjoy large lots where they play, grow gardens, trees, flowers and can keep livestock. At the heart of the community is an irrigation system that connects every lot. In June of 2004, residents were encouraged by Boise City Council to generate a neighborhood plan for future land use. The mission of the *Big Sky Neighborhood Plan* is to preserve the large lots and open character of the neighborhood and to retain the rural personality of this unique location, while encouraging increased agrarian rights.

West Valley Community Center Plan (2002)

The *West Valley Community Center Plan* is a site specific plan to revitalize the old town site of Ustick and the adjacent retail area near the intersection of Ustick and Five Mile Roads. The purpose of the plan is to recreate the neighborhood's own community center full of healthy businesses, workplaces, and gathering places -- a multifaceted community center with convenient neighborhood shopping, pleasant surroundings, a place to walk, play, and visit with neighbors. The plan looks to create a neighborhood with a choice of residences for all ages and incomes, opportunities to walk and bicycle to nearby shopping, adequate retail and new local employment opportunities. A desired outcome is to reduce the number and distance of vehicle trips on the overcrowded road networks while providing an enhanced quality of life for the entire West Valley Neighborhood.

Ustick Neighborhood Plan (1997)

The Ustick neighborhood contains 130 acres of mostly two-acre lots surrounded by Ustick Road, Maple Grove Road, Cory Lane and North Mitchell Street. The area dates from 1908, when the Interurban Streetcar Company built a line along Ustick Road, connecting it with Boise and the surrounding towns. The Ustick area originally contained a number of irrigated orchards and country homes. Current land uses include residential, open space, public uses and small commercial areas within a walkable environment. Today, as the city grows, the area is under pressure to increase density. The plan envisions residential infill resulting in a neighborhood with a mix of housing types and prices, including single family, duplexes, town homes and apartments, and sets out design principles for the neighborhood. Also envisioned are a new park, school, and better pedestrian connections to transit stops.

Ada County Highway District Boise West Bench Neighborhood Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan (2013)

The *West Bench Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan* focuses on making bicycling and walking comfortable, efficient and convenient forms of transportation for residents and visitors in the West Bench area of the City. The plan provides a list of prioritized bike and pedestrian projects developed through ACHD's outreach efforts and assists City neighborhoods and the City team in annually recommending their highest priority bike and pedestrian projects for consideration in the ACHD Five-Year Work Plan.

WEST BENCH POLICIES

Related Planning Documents

Eagle Road Corridor Project Development Program– Multi-Use Pathway Improvement, Phases 1 and 2 (2016)

The *Eagle Road Corridor Project Development Program* addresses the need for bicycle and pedestrian facilities along Eagle Road. Many gaps exist in sidewalks between Overland Road and Chinden Boulevard and there are no bike lanes. Phase 1 identified and prioritized pathway needs on the corridor. Phase 2 developed specific, programmable projects for a continuous 10-foot pathway along four segments of Eagle Road in the following high priority areas:

- Franklin Road to Pine Avenue (east side of Eagle Road)
- Pine Avenue to Fairview Avenue (west side of Eagle Road)
- Fairview Avenue to River Valley Street (west side of Eagle Road)
- River Valley Street to Ustick Road (west side of Eagle Road)

Eagle Road Corridor Project Development Program – Multi-use Pathway Improvement, Phase 3 (2017)

Phase 3 of the *Eagle Road Corridor Project Development Program* developed three application-ready, pre-concepts for pathway projects along the corridor. Projects were scoped for the following segments:

- River Valley Street to Ustick Road (east side of Eagle Road)
- Boise / Meridian City Limit to McMillan Road (west side of Eagle Road)
- McMillan Road to Chinden Road (both sides of Eagle Road)



Education Facility: In 1999, Dr. Trudy Comba donated a piece of property located near the corner of Five Mile and Ustick Road to the City of Boise. The site included an education “barn” and 3.5 acres of land. The Comba family’s vision was that the barn be used for educational purposes, focusing on kids in need. In 2013, the City of Boise, the Comba family, and Boise Urban Garden School (BUGS) partnered to rebuild the barn. The BUGS “barn” is now a 1,500 square foot indoor education facility, complete with an onsite commercial kitchen. Additionally, Comba park is home to a new .75 acre garden, a playground and Boise’s first sprayground, a play area designed for children with water features that spray, sprinkle, and drop water.



Neighborhood: Comba Park and the BUGS education facility are located near the intersection of Five Mile and Ustick Road. There are seven schools within close proximity of Comba Park, with a high population of low-income students. There are very few opportunities for after school and summer enrichment programs for children in this neighborhood. The location of the BUGS education facility provides easy access to neighborhood children who wish to attend programs. The garden and onsite commercial kitchen provide facilities for greater community involvement at the park.