Booming *in* Boise

AMERICA'S FASTEST-GROWING CITY KEEPS PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT BUSY ENSURING 'LIVABILITY' IS MORE THAN JUST A CATCHPHRASE

BOISE
CITY OF TREES

150 N. Capitol Blvd.
Boise, ID 83702

Phone: (208) 608-7000
Email: info@cityofboise.org
Web: www.cityofboise.org

This article is the next in an annual series profiling the inspection and code enforcement departments in cities across the United States. If your city features unique challenges that would be of interest to our readers, please contact the editors at geoff.bilau@iapmo.org or jeff.ortiz@iapmo.org.

Sean Campbell, left, and Nick Ward of DeBest Plumbing work in the boiler room of the new Children's Pavilion at St. Luke's Boise Medical Center.

PHOTOS BY GEOFF BILAU

Story by Mike Flenniken

With its affordable housing, booming economy and year-round outdoor recreational activities — not to mention a relatively mild climate for a place that experiences all four seasons — it's easy to see why people are flocking to Boise, Idaho. Boise topped Forbes' 2018 list of the nation's fastest-growing cities, and Idaho's 2.1% population growth from 2017 to 2018 tied with Nevada for the nation's highest.

More than 223,000 people live in Boise proper, while about 710,000 people call the five-county Boise-Nampa metropolitan area, also known as Treasure Valley, home.

The city's Planning and Development Services department is tasked with ensuring the buildings in which locals and transplants live and work are in compliance with codes governing the state.

Building Official Jason Blais has overseen the department since October, when he was appointed interim director. The city conducted 70,022 inspections in 2018, a 5.6% increase over 2017. Of those, 13,521 were for plumbing projects and 13,890 were for mechanical.

"These last few years have been extraordinary; every time I run construction reports it's like every year's a new record," he said. "At some point you wonder, 'How long can this keep going?' Only until these last three months have we started to see a little bit of a leveling off on the numbers, but there's a backlog of projects in here; they're just not issued yet. There are some big projects in the works."

Blaise estimated that during his two decades with the city — which also included duties as building plans examiner, project manager and plan review supervisor — the ratio of single-family homes to multifamily homes has changed from 75/25 to about 50/50.

"We get a good mix of projects," he said.

"A lot of apartments," Plumbing Inspection Supervisor Dan Ediger agreed. "Apartments and hospitals right now, and then you've got the apartments with retail down below, that kind of thing."

Ediger supervises the department's three plumbing inspectors, who ensure that plumbing work meets the provisions outlined in the Idaho State Plumbing Code, which is based on IAPMO's American National Standard *2015 Uniform Plumbing Code*.

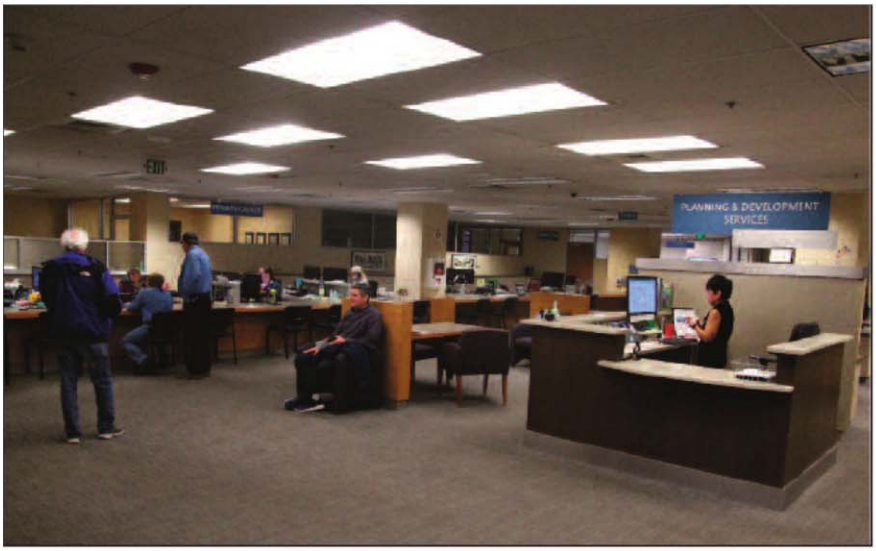
Going Green

Blais said three years ago, the city council and mayor decided that every new city building would be more water and energy efficient, or green buildings.

"All our new fire stations are green buildings, which is great," he said. "They're investing in that energy efficiency up front, which not everybody does."

At right, Boise topped Forbes' 2018 list of the nation's fastest-growing cities. Below middle, Planning and Development Services operates out of the City Hall building in downtown Boise. Bottom, the public customer service area of Planning and Development Services.

PHOTOS BY GEOFF BILAU



Ediger said the city is also working on promoting the use of solar energy, especially for commercial buildings.

"Electricians are actually in special training," he said. "We're getting so many permits taken out for photovoltaic systems that they're going to special training on a regular rotation to keep up with it. Thermal side, not so much, even though it's a lot more efficient; natural gas is just so inexpensive."

"Definitely we are seeing a huge interest in the solar photovoltaic systems," Blais said. "Again, that's another area where we see record permits."

Geothermal energy also plays a prominent role in heating the downtown corridor. In fact, Boise has the nation's largest municipally owned system in the United States, with more than 20 miles of pipeline carrying water in excess of 170 degrees Fahrenheit to heat nearly 100 buildings.

"The old pipes are redwood, and so when they collapse — they're over 100 years old — so when they have a leak they replace a section of it," Ediger said. "They've replaced this whole street."

"The city has been doing thermal imaging from above to try to see where the next leak might be in some of that old piping," Blais

Far left, Plumbing Inspection Supervisor Dan Ediger. At left, Building Official Jason Blais. Below, the permit counter at Planning and Development Services.

PHOTOS BY GEOFF BILAU

said. "You can kind of see where it's bubbling up before it blows."

Challenges

Keeping up with the steady influx of people and businesses to the area continues to be the department's biggest challenge, and Blais said the department has adjusted accordingly to keep up with demand, whether adding positions or simply repurposing them according to need.

"We're always trying to project the pipeline and what's coming in because we know construction can be cyclical," he said. "You don't want to over hire and then have a downturn, but the trend's been going up and up and up. People say it's going to level off, but we'll see; we're not seeing it quite yet."

The city's numerous historic buildings present another challenge for the department. Ediger said while there is a strong desire to keep historic buildings and bring them up to code, doing so can sometimes be cost-prohibitive and they are sometimes torn down in favor of a new structure.

Blais said the city recently adopted another new historic district aimed at preserving a one- or two-block radius of Victorian homes that had been proposed for demolition in favor of multifamily housing.

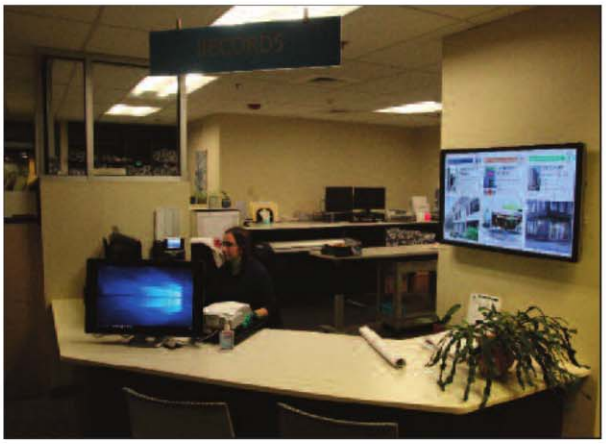
"There are many on our council who want to preserve a lot of our historic buildings where we can, so it's part of the balance," he said.

Department Tour

Housing specialist Carlos Velazquez then led *Official* on a tour of the Planning and Development Services Department. Beginning in Housing & Community Development — a division of the department — Velazquez highlighted several programs his division operates. Velazquez specializes in rental housing, in which the city manages more than 300 rental units. There is also a loans division that provides an opportunity for

Far right, housing specialist Carlos Velazquez leads *Official* on our tour of the office. At right top, Administrative Specialist Nikolina Elezovic operates the records department. At right middle, the lunch/break area of Planning and Development Services. Bottom, LEGO blocks serve as interactive décor in the IT department.

PHOTOS BY GEOFF BILAU



lower- and moderate-income residents to purchase a home within the city limits. The division also has a program called Energize Our Neighborhoods that is a collaboration between the city, residents, and public and private partners that aims to keep Boise's neighborhoods unique and desirable.

"They're asking the citizens, 'What is it that you guys feel like you need?'" Velazquez said. "Instead of us saying, 'Let's pour money into roads.' Yeah, everybody needs roads or sidewalks or whatever, but they're actually asking them, 'What is the need here? What is it that you see is kind of missing and that you want improvement on?' And that's pretty neat; they'll meet with them and they'll do little community events and really find out what that need is."

The tour then moved to the permit technicians and cashier counter who serve as the front line for the department.

"If anyone's looking for inspectors or plan reviewers, they're going to them first and they're finding out who they need to talk to, where they need to go," Velazquez said.

At the end of the counter there is a plan reviewer who performs over-the-counter residential plan reviews.

"Depending on the scope of the project, and if citizens are willing to wait to have their review done, it takes about an hour, then they can get it same day," he said.

Velazquez then led the tour to residential and commercial Plan Review, which now has an open-floor concept thanks to a recent makeover that much of the department is undergoing. When a customer needs to meet with a reviewer, a permit technician will either call a plan

reviewer over the loud speaker or come back to get him or her.

Next was Planning and Zoning, which Velazquez fittingly described as looking like a maze as it awaits its open-concept makeover.
We have a dual-monitor thing going on so that way they can see, talk about setbacks, talk about land use," he said. "They can see what we're seeing whenever we're reviewing that and they can find out if they can actually do that before they get to the building department and find out, 'Hey, you can't do that because it's not allowed use.'"

The tour concluded after stops at the records center and Information Technology, which is situated in the administrative operations wing of the department.

Meeting the Inspectors

After the tour, *Official* sat down in a third-floor conference room to meet with some of the inspectors and supervisors who oversee projects throughout the city.

First were Eric Strole, a plumbing and mechanical inspector, and Matt Wrobel, a plumbing inspector.

Strole has been with the department for 10 years and his area includes Harris Ranch, a fast-growing residential area in east Boise's Barber Valley.

He estimated that he can have about two dozen inspections on busy days, with the bulk of them being new residential construction.

Strole is also the lead inspector for the massive Micron Technology, Inc. complex.

Headquartered in Boise, Micron is a conglomeration of companies that make such semiconductor devices as dynamic random-access memory, flash memory, USB flash drives, and solid-state drives.

"I've been doing inspections at Micron for a long time," Strole said. "They just have a variety of piping systems that we don't see every day. Piping, and IW [indirect waste] and HW [hot water] and just all the different systems that they have out there that you don't see in residential or commercial and the other projects. And their testing and everything else is way above and beyond what anybody else does."

Plumbing and Mechanical Inspector Eric Strole.

PHOTO BY GEOFF BILAU

Strole said he frequently learns about the unique technology and methods used in their projects while he is out there, but he's become quite familiar with much of it over time. He said Micron also has its own inspectors to review tests and make sure everything is in order.

Wrobel covers the west end of the valley, an area that is far more spread out than Strole's. "It's just huge," he said. "It takes forever to get from job to job. That's just my challenge, trying to get to everything, so much construction."

Wrobel said he inspects a lot of remodels, water heater replacements, and gas line upgrades.

Born and raised in Boise, his father owned a large plumbing supply business. Wrobel then worked in residential and ultimately was a foreman on large commercial projects.

Wrobel offers a simple explanation for his desire to switch from foreman to inspector.

Ediger looks at plans with Fire Protection Systems Supervisor Adele Schaffield-Griffin.

PHOTO BY GEOFF BILAU

"Honestly, like I told them when I was being interviewed, I said I've been doing this for 40 years," he said. "I'm only 47, but I was literally raised in it. And I said I can't pack 6-inch cast iron for 20 more years, but by becoming an inspector I could stay in the trade I've dedicated my life to. Since I was in diapers I've been in plumbing. So this is a way I can stay in it and finish out my career."

The department's goal is to provide morning inspections for permit holders requesting one by 7:30 a.m., and afternoon for requests received by 11:30 a.m.

Ediger said the department does not have a limit for the number of requests it takes for the morning and afternoon, so it is important for the inspectors in the field to communicate and help each other out when needed.

"We're getting to a point where we're going to need to bring another inspector on, but right now we're managing," he said. Strole said the steady stream of inspection requests can lead to surprises when checking their work load in the field.

"You turn your computer on in the morning, you have three afternoon inspections and you're like, 'Ah, going have some time to do something today,'" he said. "And then you go to take lunch, you refresh your computer and it says you have 17 all of a sudden and you're like, 'Oh.'"

Though it can sometimes be a daunting task, Strole said, "We make it most of the time. In my time here there's probably only been less than a half a dozen times that I haven't made it."

The department offers three options for scheduling an inspection: online, over the phone or through a mobile application. Ediger said they will soon transition to a new system in which the inspector will be able to bring up a map on which the addresses are plotted, making it easier to plan routes. He said they sometimes need to work around a homeowner's request to be finished by a specific time, and the inspectors have full autonomy over when they go to each project.

"The inspectors have full control of their route and they work it the best, they do a really good job," he said.

Strole and Wrobel then headed out for a day of inspections, and Mechanical Inspections Supervisor Chad Schwendiman sat down with *Official*. Schwendiman supervises three full-time mechanical inspectors and a plan reviewer who is also a certified inspector, so he can help out as needed. Strole, who is primarily a plumbing inspector, also performs residential mechanical inspections.

Schwendiman said while there are few problems with most of the valley's established contractors, the biggest issues they have are

with educating contractors who aren't familiar with their codes and with some of the veterans who are reluctant to change with the times.

"There's been a huge push on energy efficiency the last few years," he said, "and so that brings with it some of the insulation and ductwork and things like that as we bring energy codes up to make installations more energy efficient. Some of the old-school ways are going by the wayside and some of the old-school installers, who are guys who have been doing it for years and years, don't like necessarily changing to go with the new times."

Schwendiman said more and more people are installing equipment that is 90% efficient, such as furnaces, when 80% used to be more common.

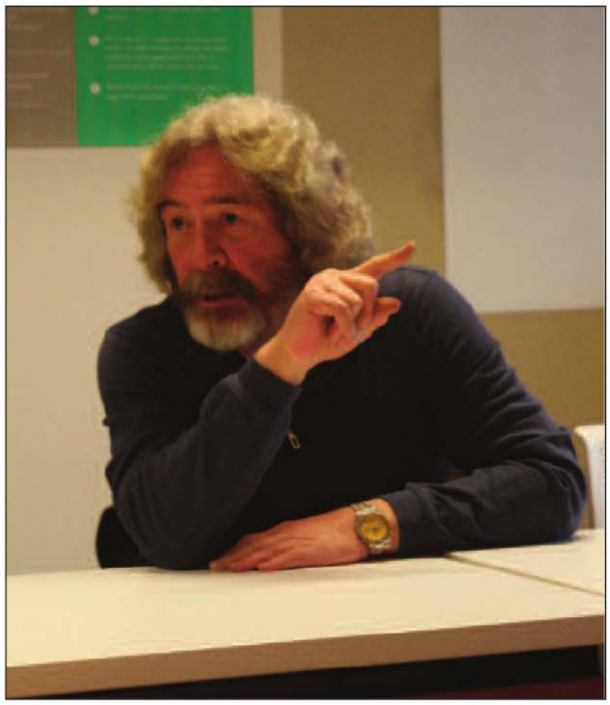
"A lot of people are changing the less efficient units out," he said. "We see a lot of tankless water heaters in residential — and that's more on the plumbing side — but we do address it on the gas side sometimes."

Schwendiman said residents are motivated by a combination of wanting to have less of an impact on the environment and the desire to save money on utility bills.

"As the equipment costs come down it becomes more affordable, but a lot of it is just people wanting a smaller footprint on the environment than what they currently do," he said. "People want to get involved in energy efficiency; they want lower utility bills. So, I think it's driven by both. A fair mixture of both."

As for historic buildings, Schwendiman said the proposals go through historic plan review before the mechanical inspectors look at them. However, he does see one common problem when it comes to mechanical renovations.

"The biggest problem I see on the mechanical side is finding ways to get the new mechanical systems into these existing historic buildings, where there's not much space in them for putting air conditioning systems in," he said. "But we've got the geothermal here, that a lot of people take advantage of in the downtown area where we do have historic buildings, so you get a lot of hot water heating and designs like that."



Building Inspector Supervisor Bob Archibald.

PHOTO BY GEOFF BILAU

Ediger added, "The builder I was talking to when we were down in the entry is working on a duplex that is turn of the century. They're just polishing the façade, gutting the interior, and that's what we see a lot of, is they'll go and gut the interior and then the building and mechanical come in, and then they put it back as a historical look; it's typically not modern."

Building Inspector Supervisor Bob Archibald, a 31-year department veteran, then entered the conversation. Archibald oversees six building inspectors.

"Pretty much I'm the building inspection manager, erosion and sediment control manager, and then special projects cover everything else," he said, "but like Dan [Ediger] was saying, from patios to high-rises, we cover them all and then if there's something that comes to the mayor's attention or the public's attention that's a problem, I'm responsible for abating that."

Archibald said while there are still quite a few historic buildings downtown, a number of them have been razed, leading to a change in wind characteristics due to the addition of high-rises. He said the city works with the downtown association when it comes to deciding which projects to allow, and that a number of large ones are in the works.

"We've been seeing a lot of live/work units coming in lately with these multifamily buildings," Schwendiman said. "The first story will be live/works and commercial, and then the residential above them just like this building over here. They seem to be the design to do right now."

"There's a really, really good night life downtown and a lot of the young up-and-comers that like to live down here, and be involved in that," Ediger said. "And you can bike just about anywhere; it's a direct shot to the river from here. And then you can go from Lucky Peak to Eagle on the greenbelt."

Archibald said thanks to Micron and other complex projects that have come to the city, inspectors are exposed to a wide variety of systems and applications that are installed.

"People try to steal our people all the time just because of the experience they have had," he said.

Archibald said when he moved to Boise to go to school, the population was about 67,000 and much of the city was farmland. With more than 500,000 people now calling the Treasure Valley home and the vision to make Boise the nation's most livable city, the growth presents a formidable challenge.

"It's all been good, and I've been proud to be associated with that growth," he said. "The two primary objectives for me, my team and everybody else is that we maintain structural integrity and we guarantee the life safety. We're not only the occupants, but first responders in the adjacent properties, so pretty proud of that, that we've been on top of the growth."

New Inspection System

Before heading out on a tour of the city and a look at projects under review, *Official* met with Fire Protection Systems Supervisor Adele Schaffeld-Griffin about the department's new inspection system.

Schaffeld-Griffin said most plan reviews are performed electronically, ranging from about 60% for single-family dwellings to 80% for commercial projects to almost 100% for fire reviews.

Inspectors transitioned last year from connecting laptop computers to the internet via their phones' hot spots to using Surface Pro tablets and the Cradlepoint wide area network (WAN). She explained that with Cradlepoint, the internet is connected directly to the vehicle, similar to the police and fire departments. The system is also connected to the department's intranet, so inspectors have access to all of their internal files. This gives inspectors the ability to complete more of their non-inspection duties in the field.

The city is also in the process of replacing its 24-year-old permitting software, which will reduce the amount of time the inspectors are required to spend entering data. The city clerk and fire department went live with the new software about a year ago, but Schaffeld-Griffin said it is far more complex for the Building Division.

"Plan review is super complicated with all these pieces firing off in different directions," she said, "so it just takes longer to build out because we don't want to go live until we're ready; we don't want our customers to run into problems."

Schaffeld-Griffin said once the inspections are complete, applicants receive a notice via email or text on their phone letting them know whether they passed, eliminating the need for them to call in or go online to check the status.

Connect Boise

While customer service is the first priority with the city of Boise, Schaffeld-Griffin said the employee experience and culture runs a close second.

The city has a new employee development program called Connect Boise that encourages supervisors to meet regularly with their employees to set and monitor goals, address any issues that may arise, and reward outstanding performance.

"The city has changed the culture here to really focus on the employees, provide employee development, employee opportunities, and then empower the supervisors to provide those same learning opportunities and room for growth for our direct reports, as well," she

At left, the exterior of the new Children's Pavilion at St. Luke's Boise Medical Center, which will house medical exam offices, a teaching kitchen, family resource center, and sibling care center. Below, DeBest Plumbing Foreman Steve Asche discusses the boiler setup with Ediger.

PHOTOS BY GEOFF BILAU

said. "So the whole culture has changed with Connect Boise."

"It's a phenomenal program," Ediger said. "It's very impressive that HR put this program together; it has opened up communication channels throughout the year, but our old system all the communicating would happen at the end of the year. So, it was like, 'Oh gosh, what was our goal, I forgot about that.' Now we work on goals all year."

Project Tour

ST. LUKE'S CHILDREN'S PAVILION

The first stop on the tour was the new Children's Pavilion at St. Luke's Boise Medical Center. The first addition in the massive downtown master plan for the medical center, the medical office building includes four standardized clinics on each floor, a fully functional teaching kitchen with attached training room, family resource center and sibling care center.

In the main plant penthouse on the fifth floor, DeBest Plumbing foreman Steve Asche pointed to the three boilers that will heat the building and the primary and secondary loops that were overhead.

"We've got one loop here, we've got three pumps up here, and then we're shooting back into the main loop and going back over to my main pumps that feed the other seven

At right, three boilers will heat the five-story medical office building.

Opposite page, clockwise from top left: An unfinished corridor of the Children's Pavilion; the entrance to the underground parking structure; restroom in one of the clinics features a specimen window; the skybridge connecting the Children's Pavilion to St. Luke's Children's Hospital; the skybridge from one floor above.

PHOTOS BY GEOFF BILAU

floors," he said. "This goes down three floors underground too."

Asche then pointed out the glycol storage tank, followed by the domestic water system, which was scheduled to be energized the following day and fired up the next week, and then the chilled water pumps.

"[The chilled water] is just to feed the air handlers, so the air handlers here will blow the cold air down," he said. "This is them, two big units here."

The tour proceeded to the rooftop deck, a nearly completed skybridge that will connect the Children's Pavilion to the St. Luke's Children's Hospital, and then the nurses' station area on the second floor.

"So you've got exam rooms on both sides. Each exam room will have plumbing, a little doctor's desk to sit at," Asche said, adding that each floor is identified by a different color (the second floor is orange).

The tour ended in project superintendent Jamal Nelson's office on the first floor, which is also the site of a kitchen where people will learn to prepare healthful food.

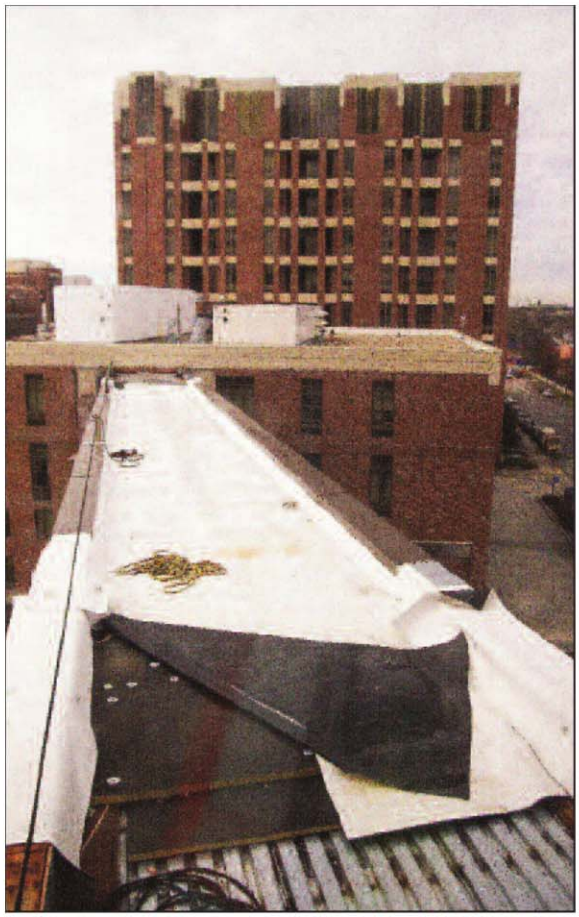
Nelson said the project broke ground in October 2016, and they started standing steel in March 2018. He is creating a photo album of the project that goes to Sept. 14, when equipment, including air handlers and chillers, was set.

"When all that equipment went in, they had the skeleton, steel framing up," Asche said, "and we dropped everything down through it. So, if you would've looked up, all that piping that was up there, we had all those racks in and we used a tower crane; we swung all that pipe in and set it in racking."

"They did a really nice job inside that penthouse, too," Nelson said. "If you've been inside of them you get an appreciation of all of the things that are going on in there and sort of bringing it all together."

Ediger added, "It's a lot coordination between the trades, too. There's a lot of pipe in there."

The project faced one large obstacle before things could even get started — the state's



At right, a sign featuring an artist's depiction of the finished building sits in front of construction of the new Salvation Army Community Center. Below, rain and snow hampered, but didn't halt, construction of the center.

PHOTOS BY GEOFF BILAU

largest sequoia tree was in the way and had to be moved to nearby Fort Boise Park.

Workers began by digging a trench around the tree, which has a 20-foot circumference, and covered the roots with burlap and wooden walls. They then essentially made a raft out of steel pipes and a series of air bladders to lift the tree off the ground. The cost of the move was estimated at more than $250,000.

"They had actually come in a year prior and cut the trench because they have to cut this giant thing around it and make sure that the tree's going to live," Nelson said. "So, they'd cut that, they'd pre-watered it for a full year before they ever started and then they went and did the relocation."

SALVATION ARMY COMMUNITY CENTER

From St. Luke's Medical Center, the tour headed northwest to a new Salvation Army Community Center that also houses a high school and living quarters for pregnant and parenting teens.

The Booth Marian Pritchett School is a partnership between the Salvation Army and the Boise School District. Scheduled to open in the fall, the school is moving from its longtime location in the city's historic north end. Foreman Jim Carriveau of Jordan-Wilcomb Construction, Inc. provided an overview of the facility.

"I've got a two-story classroom and administration over here," he said, "they've got a chapel, this is for the Salvation Army, and then on that side we've got two more large

At left, a worker surveys the roof of the community center. Below, Pat Murray of Cloverdale Plumbing reviews plans for the second floor of the facility.

PHOTOS BY GEOFF BILAU

classrooms, a full kitchen, and a gymnasium." A full playground will be built behind the community center, he added.

Cloverdale Plumbing is handling plumbing for the project, for which ground was broken in June.

On the eastern part of the second floor, Cloverdale's Pat Murray reviewed the project's blueprints.

"You are on the second floor east here, and right now we're kind of working on the men's and women's restrooms," he said. "And then we have everything on this side plumbed and done as far as the domestic piping, and the roof drains have been in for a while, except they don't have it welded up on the rooftop yet so that's why we're getting drips" from the previous day's precipitation.

Directly below, he said, would be a restroom group with a bunch of Baby Devoro toilets for small children, as well as a kitchenette, a stackable washer and dryer, and a break room for employees.

The facility also houses a large chapel with bathrooms specifically for attendees.

Murray said workers were preparing to hook up the coils for hydronic piping, and there will be two tempering stations in the second-floor mechanical room. There will be two 100-gallon water heaters, two boilers, and two booster pumps for the hydronic side. The water heaters will provide domestic hot water and 140-degree water just to the kitchen.

"It has two designated lines that run all the

Working around the elements is a requirement in Boise. Puddles from the previous day's snow melt present problems at the community center.

PHOTOS BY GEOFF BILAU

way through, and they've got big seismic expansion joints we've got to put in that just showed up before they go through this separation of the building," he said. "So, those just showed up. I'll work on those probably next week, but the first floor is done and inspected, and the walls and overhead insulation's going on."

Murray said the western part of the first floor will be heated by gas, which presented a logistical challenge.

"The gas heater and meter starts way over by the gym area, goes up onto the rooftop, picks up all the rooftop units, drops back down through the roof over here, and then it comes across and back up to the second floor, because they didn't want to see anything on the exterior of the building dropping back down," he said.

Similar to a hotel, the facility's heating and air conditioning will be controlled by a thermostat that opens and closes motorized dampers that have sensors to govern the air flow rate.

A separate company sets up the controls and balances the system, and is able to monitor it off-site via a computer.

"They'll come through and balance the system, reading air flow, dial it all into the tee, so that

Plumbers from Cloverdale Plumbing work on the suspended pipes at the Salvation Army facility.

PHOTOS BY GEOFF BILAU

way it's not blowing full pull air when you're in here to move papers around," Murray said. "They want it to just be a nice, slow transition so you don't notice it."

The company also will be able to monitor the system's efficiency, which was a priority when it was designed.

"The insulation on the hydronics, they're making it even larger just to help with the efficiency, as well, because of the loop that it has," Murray said. "It has 2-inch thickness of insulation on the whole outside diameter of it; that's why the hangers are so big on the copper pipe, to accommodate for that so you don't have any heat loss. It doesn't make the boilers operate as hard."

"They're required to have 1-inch and they're doubling it," Ediger said.

The facility tour continued downstairs past the chapel area, restrooms and kitchen, to the fire riser/mechanical room.

"The meter sits here for the gas, and then we've got the 2-inch that's going to go through that hole," Murray said. "And then that's where we're going to run it across the rooftops to serve all of the rooftop units all the way back over to where we have to go back down and through the wall."

Back outside, Ediger, who was the project's original inspector before becoming supervisor, said the area started out as a field with piles and piles of dirt.

"They took the whole top level off and we were looking at the plans trying to figure out what're they going to do with all this in the future, and this is all playground out here," he said. "Just about every inch of this place has been designed to support the building."

Being America's fastest-growing city means housing must grow proportionately. Construction is booming as a result.

PHOTO RIGHT: GETTY IMAGES
PHOTO BELOW BY GEOFF BILAU

Leaving a Legacy

In the car during a driving tour of the city, Ediger recalled how he got started in plumbing about 40 years ago working for plumbing companies in Southern California. A short time after getting out of the Air Force, he and his wife decided it was time for a change.

Why did they choose Boise?

"The quality of life," he said without hesitation. "We actually sat down and wrote down all the things that we wanted and the things we didn't want out of life and for our kids, and looked at a map. We didn't want to go any further than Kansas, Oklahoma, or past the Midwest, so we drew the line there and ran the numbers, went through it and everything pointed to Boise."

He initially worked as a factory representative for Richardson Equipment before starting his own plumbing business, Ediger Plumbing. In 2016 he learned about an opening for a coveted inspector position with the city, which would require him to shut down his business. He actually started his job with the city the day after closing Ediger Plumbing.

"Great planning, huh?" Ediger said, laughing.

Ediger was promoted to plumbing inspection supervisor in October 2018, and he embraces the opportunity to help guide Boise into the future and leave a lasting legacy.

"It's very challenging," he said of his new role. "I really like working for the city and I want to leave as big a mark on the plumbing world as I can. I'm here to make it the best it can possibly be when I leave, so that's my plan. That's really why I wanted to come work for the city and work as an inspector, just to try to help out, to help build through this growth period. This city and industry has done so much for me and my family that I wear the opportunity to serve the city as a badge of honor."