Community Conversation on Growth
June 20, 2018
Group Notes

**Group norms (guidelines were identified to ensure productive conversations)**

- No phones
- Listen (+1)
- Voice your opinion
- Not interrupting
- No criticizing (+1)
- Speak-up
- No interruptions
- “Microphone”
- Have everyone say their piece
- Be blunt/honest feedback
- Respect everyone’s views
- Good listening
- Respect for everyone’s opinions
- Active participation
- Keep politics OUT!
- Wait your turn
- Be nice
- Open mind
- Be honest
- Allow others to finish their thoughts
- Practice active listening
- Stay on topic
- Dive in

**What do you love about Boise? What do you like best about living here?**

- Accepting
- Polite/kind
- Cardboard sign “Smile”
- Affordability
- Accessibility to nature
- Economic opp.
- Wider selection
- Vibrant downtown
- Support for local & desire for more
- Small-town feel
- Neighborhood assoc. + community involvement
  - City actively cultivating
Positive (Future)
- Mass transit
- Bike lanes good – add more!

Favorites:
- Bogus Basin
- Innovative
- KIND
- There’s a “there”, a heart a real downtown, it is a destination with an identity
- Vibrant downtown
  - Work, play, live
  - Continues after 5 p.m.
- Bogus Basin – after work to play
- Amazing mix of possibilities
- Safe & clean
- Fishing at lunch on B. River
- 1st time on Main St., a stranger looked at me in the eye & smiled. Big memory. Still happens today.
- Welcoming & accessible (can approach mayor/council
  - (Refugees)
    - Can have a say with decision makers or be on council
- Can make a difference/ an impact
- Giving community
- People want to be involved. Ease of being on a board
- Proud of #IAMBOISE
- Ease lifestyle. Easy to get where you want to go
  - Groceries
  - Basics
- Floating the Boise River
  - Take my grandmother
  - Met my husband
- 1st marathon 😊
- DBA activities/events. The community shows up.
  - Twilight Criterium, Saturday Market
- Great memory – Boise River Festival
- Balloon Festival
- Greenbelt & Parks
- Foothills Open Space Recreation
- Beauty/Bucolic
- Ease/accessibility/affordable
- Small town feel, sense of community
- Friendly people, willing
• Vibrant downtown, culture, food
• Educational opps.
• Culturally progressive, increasingly diverse
• Healthy refugee population
• Greenbelt, Idaho Botanical Gardens, Alive After Five, small sports leagues, BSU Broncos, Saturday Market, ISF
• Excited for mass public transportation, more green spaces to lead a healthy lifestyle (e.g. Franklin, Esther Simplot, etc.) + experiences
• Family activities
• Excited about increased walkability
• ““ neighborhood vitality
• Mixed-use housing, diverse housing portfolio
• Preserving and maintaining open space
• Meeting diverse income levels
• Maintenance and new
• More events, things to do
• Arts and Culture
• Improved streets and bike lanes
• More housing choices/option
• Improved dating scene
• Diversity/new perspectives
• People are more engaged
• Foothills and river stuff
• Best mix of BisTour/Small town
• Friendly and outdoorsy
• Urban and access to outdoors
• We’ve been discovered
• Accessible
• River and Greenbelt
• Foothills (used to hunt)
• Running into people you know (small town)
• Bigger events and shows
• Friendliness/openness to refugees/outiders
• Cultural Diversity
• More Jobs
• Lively Downtown
• New Companies/Start-Ups (VS. “BIG 4”)
• Growing Art, Music, Culture Scene
• Political Diversity/Diversity of Thought
• Center of excellence for education
• Awareness of our quality of life (foothills, river, etc)
• Welcoming/Friendly City
• Park expansion/green space/open space
• Bike lane/route expansion
Unique Neighborhood identities
No shortage of volunteer opportunities/spirit of giving
Growing beer and wine scene
More residents in downtown/density
Vibrant Faith Community
Diverse Faith Community
Happiness (people)
More education options (k-12, charter, CWI)
Allows for amenities (ball arena, Morrison Center, etc)
Farmland - want to preserve
Customer base improving, good for Bogus Basin
Attracting families - they’re coming back after leaving - chain migration
Economic diversification - more resilient
Attractive to businesses
Farms can pollute river
More entertainment/restaurants
More support for preserving open space
Airport expansion
Density to support public transport
Need tipping point to make change in transit/infrastructure
Diversity
More opportunities - the bigger you get, the more you can do
Unobtrusive government
Access to the outdoors
The people make Boise great
  o Philanthropy/giving spirit
People smile - "Boise nice" not a show
Well maintained city - safe
Great college town
Parks and activities - Boise Greenbelt
Boise has matured over the decades
Live and Let Live attitude
Growth positives
  o No stagnation
  o Helped and hurt airport (direct flights)
  o Downtown re-vitalized
    o Diversity, welcoming people of other backgrounds
River/outdoors
Downtown
  o Walkability
Welcoming
  o Diverse, Inclusive
Greenbelt/Foothills
People are nice
• It’s safe
• Strong economy
• Affordable (ISH)
• Access to activities
• Access to City Government
• Families
  o Libraries
  o Parks
  o Schools
• Arts and Culture
• What puts the “Great” in Growth?
• Diversity of experiences
• Diversity of jobs
• Rentals turning to families investing in property
• More destinations from airport
• “I would love to live here”
• Proximity to outdoors – regional wilderness
• Open space
• Recreation, walking along river
• Accessible parks
• Recycling, environ. Conscious
• Saturday market and other community events (art in the park, global village, hot air balloons)
• Neighborhood subcultures; vibe of north end; sense of identity; investment in Bench
• Safe and clean; comfortable – don’t need eyes in the back of head
• Self-aware city gov’t – interest in community engagement 😊
• Connection to heritage and history – still visible (preservation)
• Growing vibrant arts community
• Bikability; new bike lines; planning emphasized importance
• Happiness of residents; know your neighbors; sense of community
• Large number of non-profits/charity
  o New Path – alternative housing options
  o Empty bowls
• Centrally located
• Diverse
• Outdoors
• Walkable
• Culture
• Access to Greenbelt/bike, neighborhood connected to downtown
• Athletic/outdoors
• Hikes
• Vibrant Downtown
• Treefort
• Bogus
• Tempered Climate/Seasons/Wildlife
• Family oriented
• Landscape values
• Community
• Geothermal
• School districts
• Diversity/languages
• Refugee Resettlement
• Interesting (all combined)
• Habitat
• Parks and reserves
• Beer! /Microbreweries
• Hyde Park
• Whitewater park
• 36th Street
• Expanded trails
• Transportation/connectivity
• Rail system
• Starting to think/broadly thinking Housing
• Community College
• Medical care/resources
• Friendly and nice
• Clean – lots of activity
• Outdoors/golf/hiking
• 4 season with activities
• Local breweries, wine
• Greenbelt
• Dog friendly
• Experiences
• Botanical gardens – concerts
• Arts
• For the size we get
• Artists and opportunities
• Biking to events/concerts
• Growing up in Boise
• Easy Living
• Safe (2 checkmarks)
• BSU
• Ego
• Active listen
• Open and honest
• Kind
• Vibrant downtown
• Public art
• Neigh. Culture
• Improved BSU
• Big small town - citizen connection
• Expansion of trail system
• Expansion of Parks/greenbelt
• Libraries
• Move diversity - economic/business/people
• Low unemployment and strong economy
• Improved ped and bike facilities
• Greenbelt and parks system (beautiful, safe, access)
  o New downtown pocket parts
• Bown Crossing - walkability, service, feel of ‘mini-center’ inter connectivity and access
• Livability/Walkability/Bikeability
• Sense of community - say hello - used to be friendly drivers
• Friendly people
• Preservation of foothills and land purchased
• Help other communities empathize with our communities
  o Neighborhoods appreciating other neighborhoods
• View as a community, not a conduit
• Would “be nice, don’t tailgate” types of campaigns help preserve “Boise Nice”
• Vibrant downtown/business community
• Good restaurants
• Could use better support from media and for hockey → great to have sports
• Kustra’s leadership of BSU and investment in quality
• Markets and Saturday events
• Volunteering opportunities (Lots!)
• CWI campus needed in Boise

**What concerns you about growth?**

- Housing affordability
  o Entry-level and fixed income (taxes)
  o 1st time
- Wages need to go up
  o Attract new employers
  o Increased competition?
  o Right to work?
- Market won’t produce affordable housing -> employer support?
• Against growth = against future
• Neighborhoods designed with green space and safe access to it
• Cost to build
• Not diversity of housing choices
• Subsidize smaller housing units
  o Policy and financial
• Density – impacts lifestyle, traffic, parking, etc.
• No affordability without density
• Infill to protect open space
• Affordability in and around downtown
• Incentivize infill
• Property rights vs. city’s ability to influence/incentivize good behavior
• Community buy-in for development early
  o Not just on issue/opposed
• Traffic flow
• Air quality & enviro.
• Preserve historic n’hoods
• Transportation – Bigger issue than just in Boise
  o ALTS:
    ▪ Need ways to move people across the valley
    ▪ Angry drivers – honking, impatient
    ▪ Running red lights
    ▪ Growing lack of courtesy – ped/bike/drivers
    ▪ Frustration with COMPASS’ lack of action
      • Lack of local tax option (1 issue, not the only one)
    ▪ Front & Myrtle – ITD controlled
    ▪ No local control of
    ▪ Too many plans, too many stakeholder, but no $  
    ▪ Rapidly emerging technology – need to think ahead
    ▪ Transit – access to transit afterhours needed for small business employees
    ▪ Separate charters: ITD, ACHD that include all the modes. Not holistic approach
• Affordable Housing
  o Hidden population ALICE group (United Way definition) – paycheck to paycheck
    ▪ Inequity growing that is not being addressed
  o Want: Efficient, high performing for all housing
    ▪ Workforce housing
    ▪ General affordability
      • Millennials trying to move out and get a house
    ▪ Boise becoming a place to work & play, but not live
  o NIMBY – impacts building more density – which is needed for transit. Education is needed. Even w/4 story bldgs.
• Low wages
  o Low “go on” rate for education
  o White collar (too) → blue
  o Don’t have leadership to raise min. wage (Leg.)
  o People are willing to give, but not pay for parking, good, groceries
  o Impacts housing costs & transportation costs
• Infill – neighbors should not be allowed to veto if allowed use
  o Should be good use, good design, but not perfect
• Transportation
  o Why not use the historic train line?
  o State Street corridor
• Social Issues
  o Opioid
  o Needs of people experiencing homelessness (social, medical, infrastructure, etc)
  o Increased bus service – lines + hours/frequency, routes
  o Increased bike lanes + security (bike/ped lanes only)
  o Connectivity in the City, but also with surrounding cities/areas (leverage existing canal infrastructure)
  o Better public info around bike/ped rules
  o Increased crime, make sure resources are in place to address + mitigate
• Housing + Wages
  o Affordable housing opps. Slow to develop + offer up
  o Giving homeowners options to add to existing home (+rent)
  o Easier zoning process
  o BUT respect a minimum of homeownership, privacy, original/purchased zoning area
  o High(est) # of min. wage jobs in the country
  o EDUCATION funding, esp. higher ed
  o Losing TALENT because we can’t offer high-paying jobs
  o Can’t live close to where you work
  o Enough land annexation
• Traffic!!
• Lack of public transportation
• Poor public transportation infrastructure
  o Shelters
  o Routes
• Tension/Division
• Price of housing
• Low wages/livable wage jobs
• Barriers created by State Legislature
  o Need local option
Education funding
- Entry-level jobs/new career opportunities for new professionals
- Schools
  - Charter schools, kids separated, funding challenges
- Housing accessibility
- Loss/lack of low-income housing
- Household densities increasing
- Expansion of businesses into residential areas (St. Lukes)
- Preserve core Boise things for character
  - River, Foothills, Parks, Table Rock, Neighborhoods
- Boise is isolated by air
- Losing local businesses downtown
- Increase traffic and traffic noise
- Lack of mass transit options (light rail, bus system)
- Airplane/traffic noise
- Construction
  - Lack of bike lanes/ no room and unsafe to bike
  - No belt loop- too much reliance on interstate
  - Lack of affordable housing
  - Income not keeping up with cost of living
  - No local option tax to help fund things like transpo
- NIMBY’ism for dense/affordable housing
  - Not everyone can live on ¼ lot
- Lack of childcare options/long wait list
- Lacking voice of citizen in council, planning and zoning commission
  - Not vested interest/common citizen- community advisory committee
- Affordable elderly care
- Concern about sustainability of safety
- Equity for all base citizens/keeping up with social services
- Jobs continuing to grow (livable wage)
- Loss of foothills/open spaces
- Loss of agricultural land/sprawl
- Proactive in infrastructure and planning (housing and roads)
- Becoming overly protective of our city (IE Californians)
- Losing our “welcoming” identity
- Look forward financially to implement changes that come with growth (proactive planning/funding)
- Lack of certificate based education/trades
- Income inequality- growing
- Displacement of low-income
- Affordability, especially housing
- More cars= bad air quality
- Car infrastructure
Widening roads
- Unsafe for peds

Traffic/congestion
- Commuters from other cities, interrelated to affordability
- Dissappearance of farmland
- Property taxes going up, not getting extra services
- Rental housing crisis
- Density= city of renters, but expensive rents
- Lower quality of bldg. in subdivisions, ugly homes
- Not enough infrastructure for development
- Annexing farmland
- Development increases commute times
- What can city control
- Growth pattern bad for quality of life
- Losing the things we value about Boise
- Increasing crime/jails
- Homelessness, but good CBOs
- Concentration of issues
- Infrastructure: schools, roads and bridges
  - Opportunity to plan now
- Growth that doesn’t pay for itself
- No dedicated funding for transit
- No local option tax
- Bad public transportation
- State preemption
  - Minimum wage
  - No eminent domain for trails
- Loving it to death/losing sense of place
  - River
  - Trails
- City of Boise/ACHD/ITD power struggle
- Enforcement issues, coordination
- Traffic
- Long-term plan for roads
- Worried about more time spent on roads
- Need infrastructure outside downtown for cycling and walking
- Public Transit/Bus system is inadequate- doesn’t meet need
- Look into different sizes, routes to improve
- How do we best move people?
- Downtown isn’t the only “Boise” that matters
- Every neighborhood in Boise matters and needs equal treatment
- Preservation of environment and trees (not just focus on travel)
- Parking
- Saturday hours make no sense
• Encourage people to go downtown without hikes
• Examples of growth problems:
  • Loss of “Boise nice”
  • Harder to book a flight at airport
    - Connections longer
  • Increasing traffic in north end
  • Concerned about crime – increasingly hearing about violent crimes
  • Rising cost of living
  • Increase in new employers needs to grow- need diversity
  • Worried decisions/power/money will be influenced by outside stakeholders
  • “renters are scared”
  • Don’t want inability to afford housing to drive people out
• Traffic
  • Lack of control over streets in Boise
  • Not listened to concerns regarding traffic
  • Filthy city (litter increase in row, downtown, trash)
  • Less access to city government/community influence has decreased/elected officials aren’t listening
• Less say in neighborhood plans
  - Left out of process
  - Paternal approach
  - Military reserve, stadium
• Paternalistic approach to planning and decision-making
• Too many public meetings downtown, need to move around city
• Affordability
  - Lack of affordable housing
• Telecommuters are messing up supply and demand (work for company in CA + benefits in Boise)
• Property value increases don’t benefit current residents
• Neighborhood properties turning into Air BNBs
• Kids that grow up here and do “all the right things” can’t get a job or afford to live here
• Public transit
  - Difficult to navigate (airport)
• Cabs too expensive
• Losing local (quaint) businesses
• Building a “disposable” city boring/lame architecture
• Growth too fast to process
  - Humans get frustrated
• Demolition ordinance needed to make it harder to tear old buildings down
• Not enough neighborhood community centers dispersed from downtown core
- Big companies compete with local/small Boise grown businesses
- Blue Print Boise doesn’t have enough teeth: zoning laws don’t align
- Downtown core becoming less livable and walkable
  - Too many cars - car-centric

#1 (Group Consensus) - Lack of affordable housing
- Specifically, cash buyers with capacity to buy multiple properties
- Locals with low wages competing with out-of-staters with $$. Idahoans can’t compete given wage structure.
- Problem for renters, not just buyers
- Very low stock of housing
- NIMBY – people oppose multi-family (apts) - especially if subsidized
- Even subsidized housing (HUD) rent is going up - rapidly (30% rule)
- Impact on homelessness
- Housing options need to broaden – micro apts, shipping containers, etc.

#3 - Planning
- Blueprint Boise - Maps/overlays too restrictive, expand districts
  - Stronger description of infill options - update codes to allow
  - Density/infill disrupted by small, vocal groups
    - City’s plans getting derailed, not able to execute
  - This process takes time but/and we can’t afford delays
- The more family $ (pays for) housing, (lower) other options, emotional toll, quality of life (goes down)
- Concerns
  - What is developers’ role in $ for infrastructure? (schools), sewer, roads, fire
  - What is tax structure for inbound buyers? (especially if investment properties)
  - Rent control

#2 - Transportation
- ACHD – we don’t control roads
- Public transit sorely lacking
- Loss of prime farm/foothills/open space
- Aging infrastructure
- Parks out of downtown; walkability of Bench not great
- Traffic
- Downtown parking; business impact; restaurants and vacancy
- (Increasing) parking costs and expanded hours of enforcement
• Wages lagging
• Education
• Cost of housing
• Traffic/Eagle Rd
• Impact infrastructure
• Water, schools, electric, police/fire – Enough?
• “heat island” – concrete
• Fewer trees
• Disappearance of natural landscape
• Harris Ranch/Lucky Peak (impact?) habitat
• Sage/bitterbrush gone in place of turf (park?)
• Loss of wildlife – e.g. songbirds, deer
• 2007/2008 shift between neighborhoods and city hall – trying to work within system but met with “transactional relationship”
• Homeless housing – narrow focus – hostile perspective
• Big developers driving planning – driver of housing crisis
• Small local pushed aside
• Non-profit
• Military Reserve/Bike Park
• Hearing things in Statesman first
• No heads up – betrayal of public trust
• Hostile response from officials/city
• St. Luke’s pretend public process
• “Engagement theater” not meaningful
• Transportation
• Smart growth – addressing sprawl/affordability
• Multifamily dwellings
• Forced out of Boise -> Nampa
• Not expanding transit efficiently to other parts of city
• Positive relations with ACHD, other govt, county, ITD entities
• Listening to experts
• e.g. fish and game report wildlife – wildlife corridors
• Informed by evidence based – e.g. Mesa/Ben’s Crow Inn
• Not enough walkable communities
• Loss of character/neighborhood
• Placemaking
• Low-stress bikeways
• Dependence on cars/bike lanes
• Accessible housing as families mature, can’t drive, aging households
• Blueprint Boise not followed
• St. Luke’s ignored/cherry picked to benefit St. Luke’s
• Doesn’t want ??? for big developers
• CCDC Commissioners
• Dismissed
• East End Jefferson and 27th Street
• Gentrification displacement
• Farmland/open space
• “What is hurry with dev. so fast?”
• Lack of cord. of ACHD and city
• Lack of input from ex. People
• Industrial parks going away to make room for other higher rent properties – pushing industry out
• Diversity land use
• Affordable housing – overall affordability
• Larger we grow the less we are heard;
• Example – Skill park @ Reserve
  o No one asked us
  o Lack of input
  o Lack of transparency
• Concern we are not saying NO to projects that don’t fit
• Council OVERTURNS denied projects
• Why have boards – P & Z
• Growth is out pacing services – infrastructure not keeping up
• Schools – quality in affordable areas
• Preservation – tearing down instead of keeping
• Outsiders don’t understand culture/history/what Boise was
• Keeping our roots
• Boise is and has been a good place – not because of growth
• Move here and then change it
• Boise not being Boise
• Becoming like the place people left (Austin)
• What’s wrong with being Boise. Don’t’ want to be Portland
• Take best practices from cities
  1. Losing pos. attributes of Boise
  2. Cost => Housing/wages, prices exceed wages, taxes
  3. Transparency at the City – taking input
• Air quality
• Traffic
• Affordability – housing
• Lack of public transit options
• Parking → perceptions
• Resistance to Infill
• Entrenched auto-centric attitudes
• Public Health
• Homelessness
Disconnect between land use and transportation
School crowding
Maintaining high level of citizen engagement
State govt that is antagonistic (or indifferent) to city desires and needs
Incentives to greenfield dev over infill
Gridlocked traffic
Sprawl is happening fast – pressures traffic
ACHD – separate entity, not tasked with mass transit, only car focused
Growth has overtaken street capacity
Improvements haven’t happened as scheduled/needed
Allowing high density development without capacity/infrastructure to support
Developers are buying/developing for profit, not necessarily best use
Disconnect regarding priorities between city, ACHD, ITD
Developers should be paying more for infrastructure/services
Quality of life should be as high a concern as safety for ACHD – needs to be captured in a guiding document
*Bike plan is good!
Can there be an incentive for e-bikes?
Light rail would help – need bus system connections – last mile
Need expansion of bus system
Frequency
Supports affordability
What can be done to create the need (congestion rates)
City needs to support expansion of transit (autonomous vehicles)
Housing – especially workforce
What is the end goal? How many people do we want to come?
Preservation of ag/natural lands
Larger conversation across Ada County
Preserve access to downtown
Are there plans for neighborhood activity centers?
Need highrises on Fairview/State
Need more focus on density/infill
Affordability of housing for everyone (services, RNs, etc.)
Should businesses subsidize public transit and housing
“dorm communities” for Micron, etc.
Activity Centers in neighborhoods with connectivity to P.O. I. and services
Zoning to encourage private development
Time it takes to construct becomes preventative for rail
Should limits be placed on growth until there is a larger plan/decision about strategic direction made?

Side Notes
• Boise needs a cooler flag!
• No Ike a
• No Intl Hub
• Too far from anything (the closest city is SLC!)
• Equity of access across city to nature
• Threats to locals