



State Street TOD Design and Implementation Plan: Stakeholder Meeting Summary

1. Introduction

On October 19 and 20, 2017, the City of Boise and MIG, with Leland Consulting Group and the Nielson Group, held a series of interviews and focus groups with local and regional land developers, affordable housing developers and commercial real estate brokers. The focus of these interviews was to discuss the possibility of future transit-oriented development along the State Street corridor where future bus rapid transit is planned. The discussions allowed the planning team to gain perspectives from stakeholders with a specific interest in or understanding of the corridor, and the potential market demand and challenges along State Street. COMPASS coordinated invitations and scheduling for the meetings, held at Kittelson Associates, Inc. offices in Downtown Boise.

The planning team organized the discussions around a similar set of questions intended to understand challenges, opportunities and desired outcomes for development, and will use the interview findings to guide TOD concept development for locations along the corridor (as part of a future task).

Interviews

The planning team facilitated interviews with the following individuals:

- Gary Hawkins: Hawkins Companies
- Gerald Hunter: Idaho Housing Finance Association-
- Steve Taylor: Neighborworks Boise
- Matt Scoggins and Clay Sammis: Sawtooth Development
- Stephen Jaeger: Argonaut Investments
- Mike Brown: Local Construct
- Bill Truax: Inflection Development LLC
- Clay Carley, Old Boise LLC
- Lynn Hightower: Boise Downtown Association
- Jennifer McEntee: Cushman and Wakefield
- Rick Palmer: Collister Community Church
- Gerald Hunter: Idaho Finance Association
- Kelly Schnebly: Colliers Association



STATE STREET CORRIDOR

TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

- Ryan Cleverly and David Wali: Gardner Company
- Julie Marple, Northwest Real Estate Capital Corporation
- Don Kemper, founder, Healthwise
- Will Kemper, Windermere Real Estate
- AnaMarie Guiles, Housing and Community Development, City of Boise

2. Key Findings

The following key findings emerged from the focus group and individual discussions.

Development Potential

The development potential for the corridor, including input received from stakeholders, is described in the State Street Corridor market analysis update (draft, dated January 2017), which contains sections on corridor demographics, housing, retail, and office markets, and special features of each station area.).

Key points interviewees focused related to development potential included:

- **The State Street Corridor is developing, primarily with housing.** Housing development is occurring at various scales along the corridor, including North Pointe/Kensington (approximately 300 garden-style apartments recently constructed near the Glenwood intersection and approximately 40,000 square feet of retail) and near the Horseshoe Bend intersection (townhomes). An important aspect of the Kensington apartments was including townhomes at the edge as a transition to single family neighborhoods. Other, smaller infill or small mixed-use projects have been recently constructed south of State Street, south of the Boise River in Garden City, and along Veterans Memorial Drive. Square foot rents vary considerably along the corridor. Currently, the highest apartment rents are in and near Downtown Boise. These rates could move out along the corridor as the region's population grows. While new or existing residential development appears to be generating higher rents near Downtown Boise, newer product further west also appears to be attractive, albeit renting at lower rates.
- **High priority development sites include the ITD headquarters and other areas that would permit phased redevelopment.** Developers and landowners stated that vacant or underdeveloped sites, particularly large sites, would likely be phased. Repurposing existing built commercial structures, at least temporarily, or focusing on infill first, would likely be more successful.



STATE STREET CORRIDOR

TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

- **There are a lot of redevelopment possibilities.** Interviewees representing some of the aging commercial properties are interested in how transit could transform the area and particularly if redeveloping their properties could bring higher returns through repurposing, incremental changes, or major redevelopment. While views differed on the future strength of the retail market, there is recognition that retail is changing dramatically, with much spending moving on-line. This will likely constrain rents and increase vacancies, which would encourage owners to consider the reuse or redevelopment of commercial properties. One broker said that some larger retail spaces are being partitioned with shelves to reduce the amount of floorspace.
- **Most property owners and developers are receptive to TOD.** They recognize that—since most of the property on State Street was built prior to 2000—much of it is getting a bit tired and could benefit from amenities such as improved transit service, walkability, quality streetscapes, and sense of place. These features can be combined with Boise’s “Energize Our Neighborhoods” framework, which also encompasses children and youth education (e.g., schools), environment, public art, health, and more. These features can create places that are “happy and healthy” and “affordable life communities” and provide differentiation to land owners’ properties.
- **Financing is challenging to secure for mixed use or non-traditional types of projects.** Several developers said financing for mixed-use projects is challenging and often requires multiple sources. This is problematic for smaller developers with less access to financing, although some of the larger developers interviewed said this is also a challenge, particularly if the return on investment may not be immediate.
- **The corridor has several large landowners, particularly with large, aging commercial developments.** Interviewees suggested that these are the sites that could transition faster.
- **The middle section of the corridor was generally less desirable than the bookends.** The Collister station area and sometimes the 30th Street and Glenwood station areas—were often viewed as less desirable from a housing and commercial point of view, compared to the bookends of the corridor—central Boise and Eagle—which are perceived as experiencing significant growth and investment. Signs of challenges in this middle area includes the departure of an Albertson’s and other tenants near Collister.

Street Design

- **Visibility, parking and easy access are essential.** All interviewees said adequate parking is essential for their developments although there is opportunity for infill development in large parking fields that are underutilized. Some property owners expressed concern that BRT



STATE STREET CORRIDOR

TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

might impede their customers' ability to access their sites, or that public agencies would acquire part of their property frontages as part of the construction process.

- **Focus on streetscape improvements.** Most people interviewed said that improving the existing streetscape to be more attractive and safe for bicyclists and pedestrians is essential to changing the perceptions of the corridor. This would be particularly important near the new BRT stations where pedestrian accessibility is most needed. Some people also said there is a need to better connect the neighborhoods to State Street, and to create bike and pedestrian connections from "ridge to river."
- **Capacity on State Street should be maintained.** State Street is a critical link in the area. While there are many challenges along the corridor for non-auto mobility, it still provides an essential connection between Downtown Boise and points west.
- **There are negative perceptions of State Street.** All interviewees discussed issues of safety and comfort as concerns. Lighting and cleanliness were specifically noted, as well as the lack of wayfinding. The area can provide amenities and activities for families with children while addressing safety barriers.
- **Wayfinding is lacking.** Connecting the trail system along the Boise River to the Bench is not intuitive, particularly south of State Street and through existing residential areas. Making clear connections between key attractions is important.

Transit

- **Transit needs to improve.** Several interviewees said that transit is not currently at the level of service that provides an incentive to reducing parking.
- **There is confusion how business access and BRT will function effectively with the current State Street design.** Several interviewees were not sure how side running BRT will work if you are also providing access to businesses. Some landowners were concerned about station location and whether it would affect the developability of their properties.

Livability

- **Boise's population is growing.** The Boise metropolitan area is growing rapidly and the desire for more walkable neighborhoods with nearby services are increasingly desirable. Several of the developers interviewed are already constructing mixed use projects.
- **The pedestrian and bicycle facilities are limited.** Most people interviewed said that bicycle and pedestrian facilities are inadequate and in many cases unsafe not just along

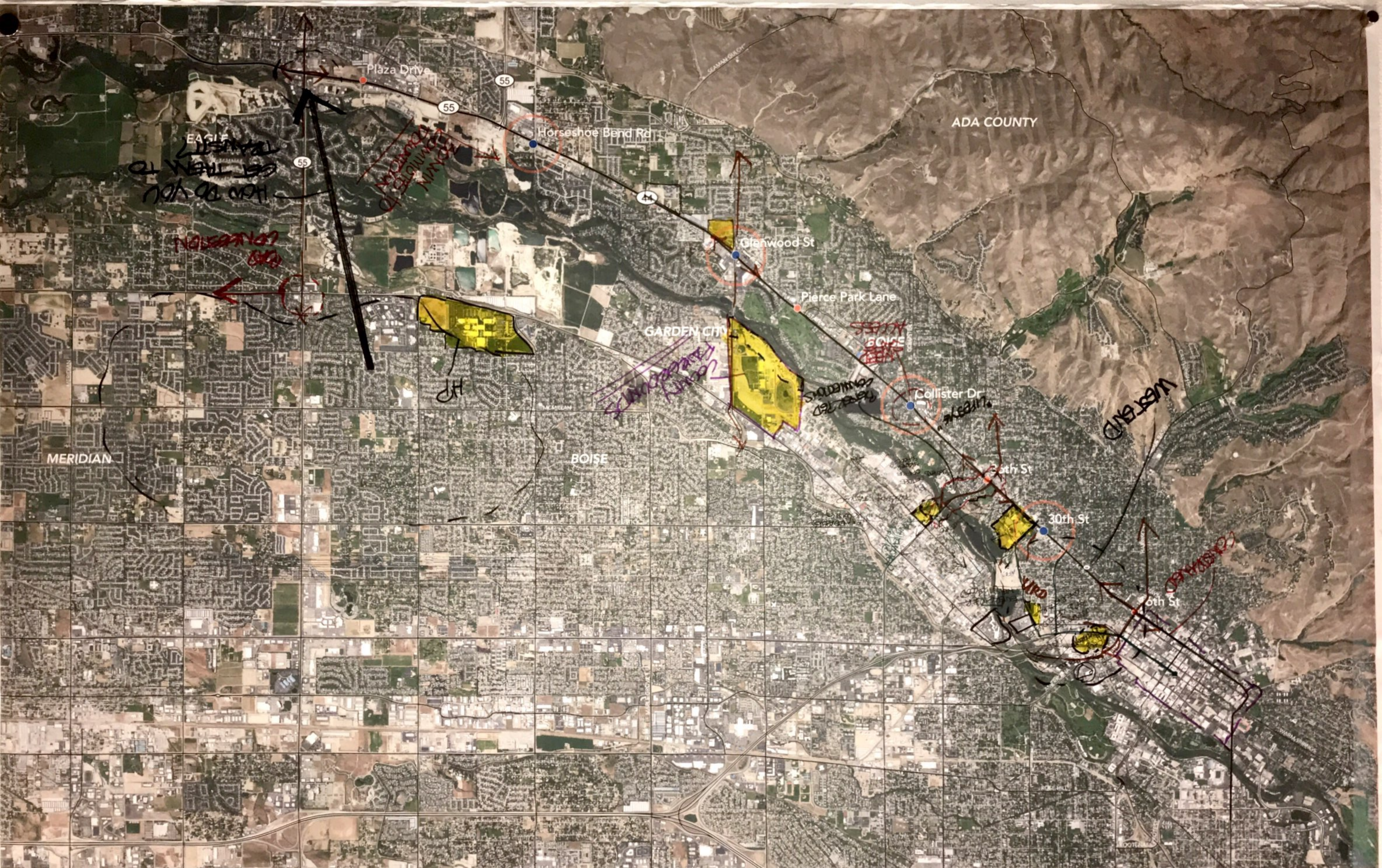


STATE STREET CORRIDOR

TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

State Street, but along the major north/south connections. The current facilities are not a selling point for developers. Safe north/south connections and improved amenities are needed if public agencies want people to use them.

- **State Street is perceived as an area that has a considerable amount of affordable housing.** This includes regulated/subsidized affordable housing, and housing that is less expensive simply because it is older. While there are regulated affordable projects in the corridor, most are older, and the City sees an opportunity to bring housing at a range of price points to the area. We spoke with several affordable/mixed-income housing developers with an interest in building projects on the corridor. Commercial lease rates are similar to the regional average, but lower than those in Downtown Boise and other strong regional retail locations like the Village at Meridian. Participants noted that low cost rents result in a reluctance to invest because of low returns.
- Interviewees believe it's more productive to discuss the need for housing at a "diversity of price points, types, and lifestyles," rather than the term "affordable," which has a stigma.



PROJECT AREA AND STATION LOCATIONS 0 2,500 5,000 Feet 



44 AC.



1/2-mile radius to TOD station

30th St

MFR

PARK

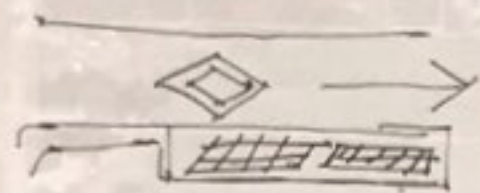


● - Primary TOD Station Locations

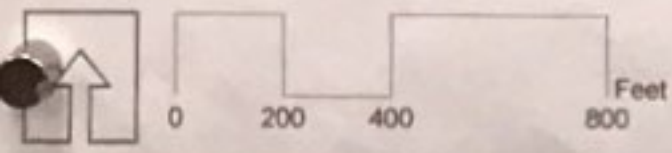
30th ST STATION



STATE STREET CORRIDOR
TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT



1/2-mile radius to TOD station



● - Primary TOD Station Locations

GLENWOOD ST STATION



STATE STREET CORRIDOR
TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT



1/2-mile radius to TOD station

Horseshoe Bend Rd

EXIST

ADJACENT

EXIST

ADJACENT



● - Primary TOD Station Locations

HORSESHOE BEND RD STATION



