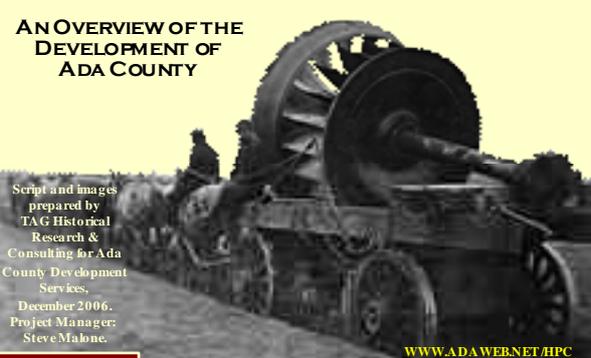


# ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES

## AN OVERVIEW OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF ADA COUNTY



Script and images prepared by TAG Historical Research & Consulting for Ada County Development Services, December 2006. Project Manager: Steve Malone.

WWW.ADAWEBNET.HPC

ADA COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COUNCIL

IS1873.5/1.8

## ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES

### Introduction

Ada County lies at the western end Snake River Plain, which is known as the Treasure Valley.




ADA COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COUNCIL

2

## ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES

### Introduction

The County is bisected by the Boise River, which flows from Lucky Peak Dam to the confluence with the Snake River at the Oregon state line.

The southern half of the County is largely undeveloped, as it lies within the Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area and the Idaho National Guard's Orchard Training Area.



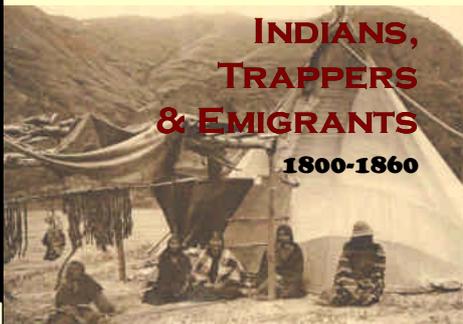
ADA COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COUNCIL

3

## ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES

# INDIANS, TRAPPERS & EMIGRANTS

### 1800-1860



ADA COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COUNCIL

## ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES

### 1800-1860

#### INDIANS, TRAPPERS & EMIGRANTS

Originally home to Native Americans, the nomadic natives created trails that would become emigration routes for future settlers. These native populations declined rapidly due to disease, war and impacts to their food sources.



ADA COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COUNCIL

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## ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES

### 1800-1860

#### INDIANS, TRAPPERS & EMIGRANTS

In 1811, the first white trappers crossed through southwestern Idaho en route to Oregon. British trappers built Fort Boise near Parma in 1834, serving as a trading post and Oregon Trail stop until it was abandoned in 1855.




ADA COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COUNCIL

IS1873.5/1.8

**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** **1800-1860**  
INDIANS, TRAPPERS & EMIGRANTS



Part of the Oregon Trail passed through Ada County along the Boise River.



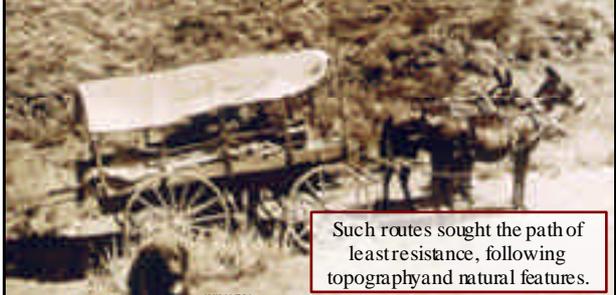
Howdy! We're just passin' through...

But Idaho's hot, dry and dusty climate discouraged most emigrants from settling here...



**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** **1800-1860**  
INDIANS, TRAPPERS & EMIGRANTS

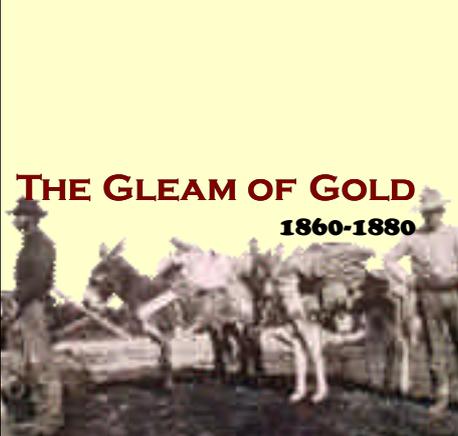
Many of Ada County's major transportation corridors are based upon parts of the route of the Oregon Trail and the various emigrant trails that originated from it. State Street, Chinden Boulevard, Hill Road and Boise Avenue are some examples.



Such routes sought the path of least resistance, following topography and natural features.

**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES**

**THE GLEAM OF GOLD**  
**1860-1880**



ADA COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION GUNCLUB

**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** **1860-1880**  
THE GLEAM OF GOLD

The discovery of gold in the summer of 1862 brought an influx of miners into the region.

That's the last of the gold, so I guess I'll be heading back to Dixie...

But most stayed only long enough to strike it rich...




**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** **1860-1880**  
THE GLEAM OF GOLD

The lucrative business of supplying the needs of miners provided the impetus for people to put down roots in Boise.



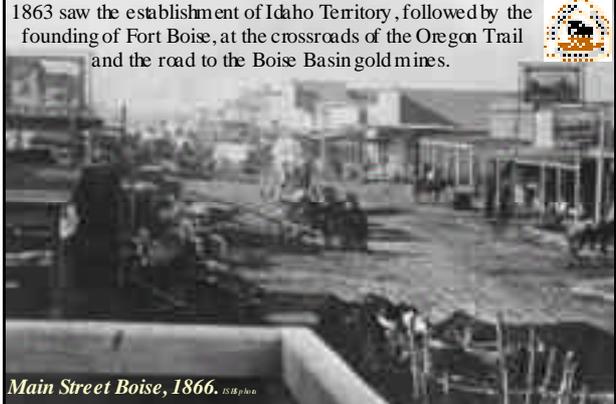
**Tom & Julia Davis**  
1867-1870

Tom Davis is said to have earned \$50,000 the first year after claiming the first water right on the Boise River.



**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** **1860-1880**  
THE GLEAM OF GOLD

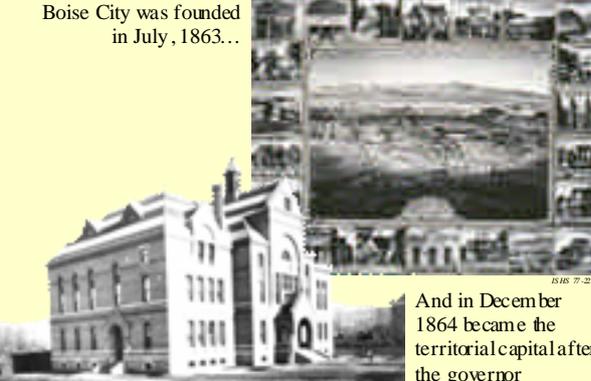
1863 saw the establishment of Idaho Territory, followed by the founding of Fort Boise, at the crossroads of the Oregon Trail and the road to the Boise Basin gold mines.



**Main Street Boise, 1866.**

**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** **1860-1880**  
THE GLEAM OF GOLD

Boise City was founded in July, 1863...



And in December 1864 became the territorial capital after the governor abandoned Lewiston.

*Territorial capitol in Boise.*

**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** **1860-1880**  
THE GLEAM OF GOLD

In 1863, city founders quickly laid out a townsite in order to provide for the future needs of Boise's residents.




Such early planning was key to providing essential services to improve conditions and thus encourage more people to settle here.

*O'Farrell Cabin today.*

**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** **1860-1880**  
THE GLEAM OF GOLD

Star's early development mirrored that of Boise. Ease of irrigation on the fertile bottomlands of the Boise River attracted early settlers. It later became an important crossroads providing services to farmers and travelers.




**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** **1860-1880**  
THE GLEAM OF GOLD

In 1864, Ben Holladay's Overland Stage Company provided the first public transportation. It provided a fast four day service to Salt Lake City and connected to a line serving Walk Wala and the Northwest. Service was later extended across the Owyhee Mountains to California.



A "Station Wagon"

**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** **1860-1880**  
THE GLEAM OF GOLD

Ada County was created in 1865. It is named after Ada Riggs, daughter of legislative representative H.C. Riggs.



The county originally included all of Canyon County and portions of Washington and Elmore counties.



**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** **1860-1880**  
THE GLEAM OF GOLD

In 1864, the Treaty of Fort Boise was signed. Natives were required to relocate to a reservation across the state at Fort Hall, but it would be 1869 before this actually happens.




As land claims accelerated, a formal survey of the State of Idaho was started at Initial Point in 1867. Idaho's principal meridian, the main north-south survey line, heads north along Meridian Road through the City of Meridian.



The Initial Point

US Bureau of Land Management

This survey is an extension of the public land survey system, which was established in Ohio in 1785. This system split land into one mile square sections, which could be further subdivided to create smaller parcels of land.



Government Land Office records

Rights of way were claimed along the boundaries of these sections, leading to our current system of streets spaced on a one mile grid.

20



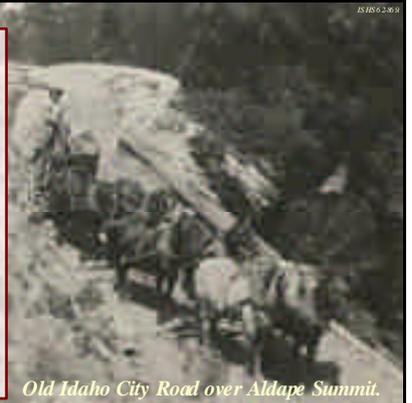
GOLDEN SPIKE

1869 saw the completion of a transcontinental railroad from Council Bluffs, Iowa to Sacramento, California.

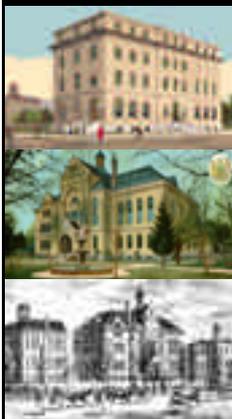
21

The new transcontinental railroad allowed goods to be more easily obtained at Kelton, Utah, via stage lines and freight wagons.

Idaho sought to have a railroad extend through the state, but a national financial panic in 1873 delayed these plans.



Old Idaho City Road over Aldape Summit.

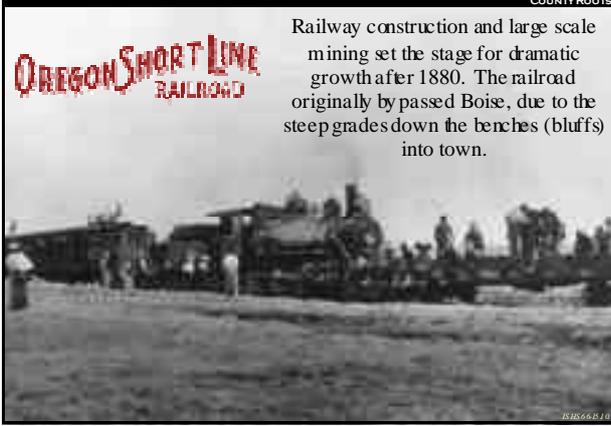


Throughout this time period Boise was developing as a key government center. Federal, state, and county offices enhanced the County's ability to grow and prosper.

COUNTY ROOTS 1880-1900



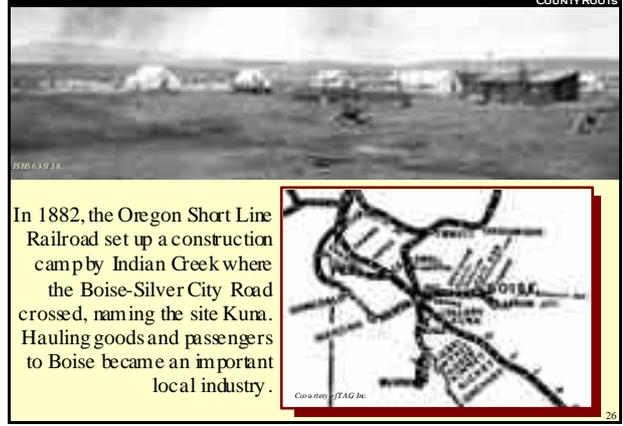
22 ADA COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COUNCIL



**OREGON SHORT LINE RAILROAD**

Railway construction and large scale mining set the stage for dramatic growth after 1880. The railroad originally bypassed Boise, due to the steep grades down the benches (bluffs) into town.

IS1866510

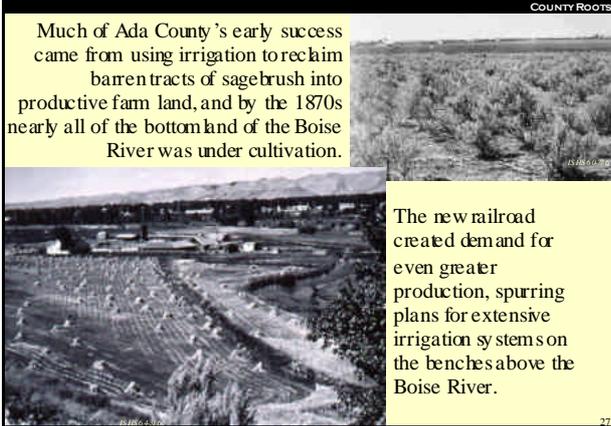


In 1882, the Oregon Short Line Railroad set up a construction camp by Indian Creek where the Boise-Silver City Road crossed, naming the site Kuna. Hauling goods and passengers to Boise became an important local industry.



Courtesy FLAG Inc.

26

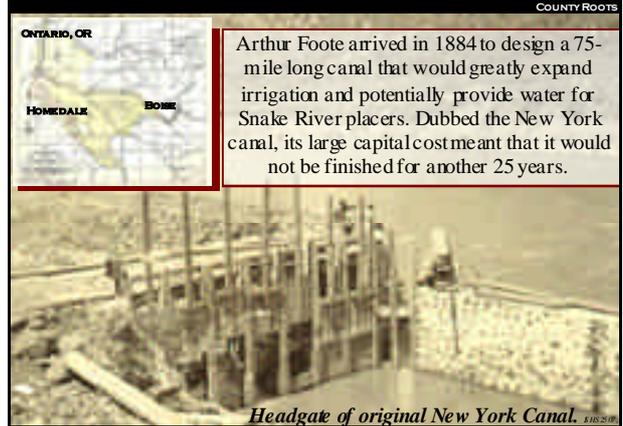


Much of Ada County's early success came from using irrigation to reclaim barren tracts of sagebrush into productive farm land, and by the 1870s nearly all of the bottom land of the Boise River was under cultivation.



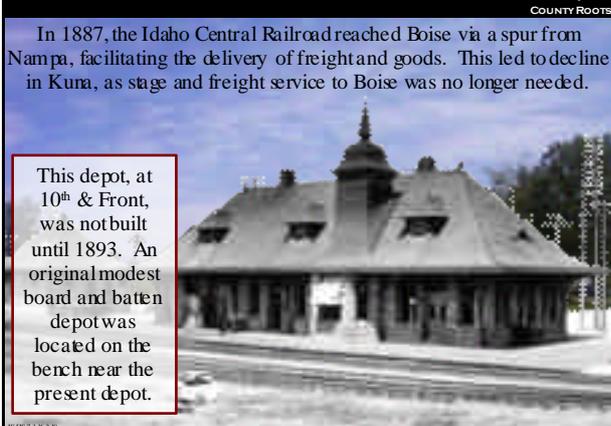
The new railroad created demand for even greater production, spurring plans for extensive irrigation systems on the benches above the Boise River.

27



Arthur Foote arrived in 1884 to design a 75-mile long canal that would greatly expand irrigation and potentially provide water for Snake River placers. Dubbed the New York canal, its large capital cost meant that it would not be finished for another 25 years.

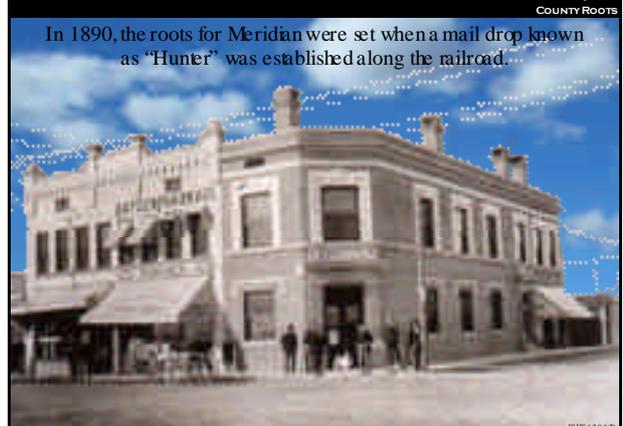
Headgate of original New York Canal. IS18209



In 1887, the Idaho Central Railroad reached Boise via a spur from Nampa, facilitating the delivery of freight and goods. This led to decline in Kuna, as stage and freight service to Boise was no longer needed.

This depot, at 10th & Front, was not built until 1893. An original modest board and batten depot was located on the bench near the present depot.

IS1873810



In 1890, the roots for Meridian were set when a mail drop known as "Hunter" was established along the railroad.

IS1862869

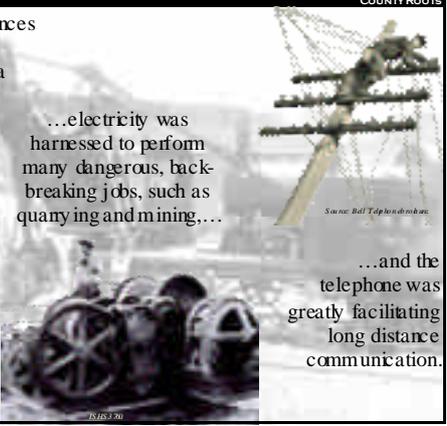
Agriculture was a big part of Meridian's early industry, which included a creamery built in 1897...



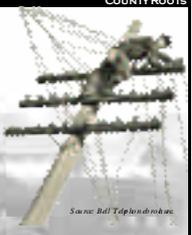
And a fruit drying plant near Beatty, a small siding near Maple Grove and Franklin.

Technological advances were transforming every day life in Ada County.

The bicycle gave people greater freedom to travel to neighboring towns...



...electricity was harnessed to perform many dangerous, back-breaking jobs, such as quarrying and mining...



...and the telephone was greatly facilitating long distance communication.

1890 brought statehood ... and a modern transportation system.



Also in 1890, the presence of hot springs in the area led to the drilling of geothermal wells next to the Old Penitentiary.



The plentiful supply of hot water was recognized as a cheap source of heating, leading to the creation of the nation's first geothermal heating district.

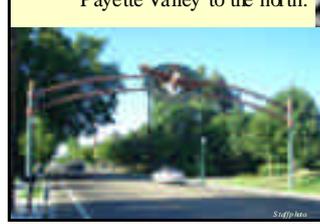


The Natatorium, a luxurious indoor pool and recreation facility, was a natural commercial use for this abundant natural hot water.



The construction of a street car line to serve the Nat, combined with the availability of hot water for heating made Warm Springs Avenue the most desirable neighborhood in Boise.

In 1891, Thomas Aiken settled the Eagle area, and a small community later formed when a bridge was built to cross the Boise River. It became an important crossroads to the Payette Valley to the north.



**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES**

**STREETCAR SUBURBS**

**1900-1920**



ADA COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COUNCIL

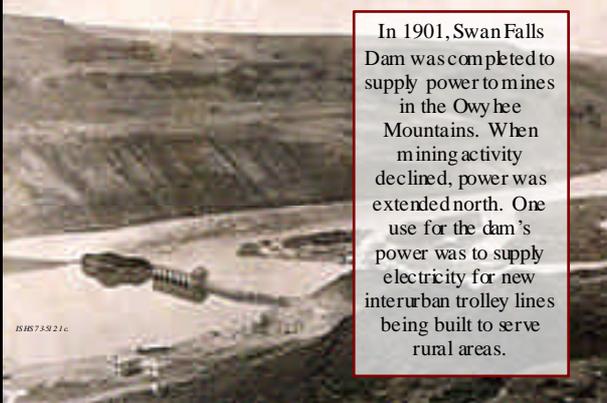
IS 187.561.6

37

**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES**

**1900-1920**

**STREETCAR TO SUBURBS**



IS 187.539.21.C

In 1901, Swan Falls Dam was completed to supply power to mines in the Owyhee Mountains. When mining activity declined, power was extended north. One use for the dam's power was to supply electricity for new interurban trolley lines being built to serve rural areas.

**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES**

**1900-1920**

**STREETCAR TO SUBURBS**

In 1902, the U.S. Reclamation Service provided the capital investment necessary for large scale irrigation projects. The Boise Project enlarged and extended the New York Canal, greatly increasing the amount of land that could be irrigated.



MAKER: DILLIARD & CO. VI - 1902

*Steam powered dragline.*

**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES**

**1900-1920**

**STREETCAR TO SUBURBS**



IS 187.561.4

Developers used streetcars to create demand for housing throughout Ada County, extolling the serenity of the country side with the conveniences of modern urban living.

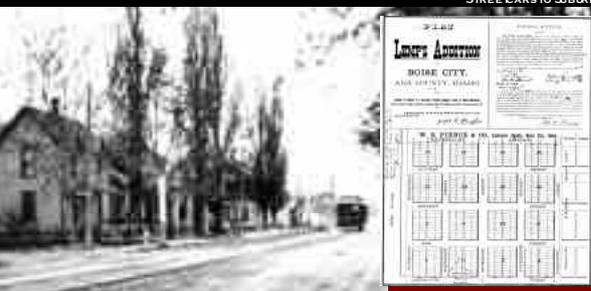


Perhaps most notable among developers was W.E. Pierce & Co, who were instrumental in developing "streetcar suburbs" such as Pierce Park, as well as subdivisions in Star and other outlying communities.

**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES**

**1900-1920**

**STREETCAR TO SUBURBS**



**Lots Addition**  
BOISE CITY, ADA COUNTY, IDAHO

Pierce and others of his time set a pattern that is still followed by today's developers - planning and financing transportation, water, services and amenities to attract home buyers.

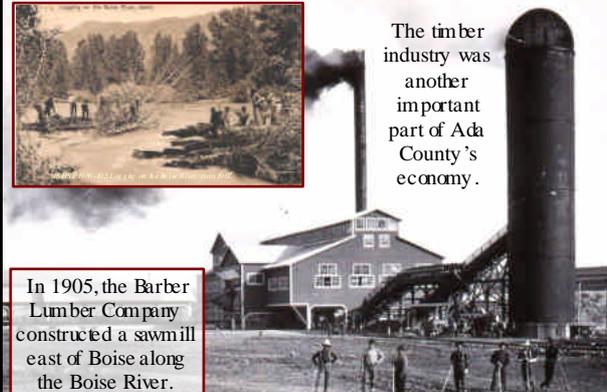
*Near 13<sup>th</sup> & Almas, Hyde Park*

IS 187.3.8.3.0

**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES**

**1900-1920**

**STREETCAR TO SUBURBS**



The timber industry was another important part of Ada County's economy.

In 1905, the Barber Lumber Company constructed a sawmill east of Boise along the Boise River.

IS 187.6.0.2

ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES 1900-1920

STREETCAR TO SUBURBS

In conjunction with the sawmill, a wooden dam was constructed across the Boise River to provide a holding pond for logs and an electrical plant for the sawmill. In 1906, a company town was built. It eventually included nearly 75 homes, a hotel, a store and a school, plus power, sewer and water service.



HS06694

ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES 1900-1920

STREETCAR TO SUBURBS

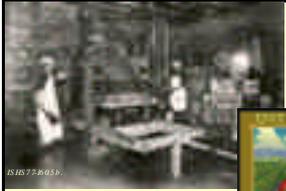


Mill Station at Harris Ranch  
 In 1934, the mill was dismantled and operations were moved to Emmett. Today a new housing development, Harris Ranch, is located on the site of Barber. Mill Station at Harris Ranch acknowledges the area's past, taking its design from the former Barber Mill.

44

ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES 1900-1920

STREETCAR TO SUBURBS



HS0728051

Another "streetcar developer" was dentist Harlan P. Ustick, who platted the Ustick townsite in 1907. He was instrumental in getting an interurban line - The Boise Valley Railway - built south of the Boise River from Boise to Nampa.

Ustick served orchardists and dairymen, who took advantage of the trolley line to get products to market. A local vinegar plant made use of surplus fruit, providing one source of employment.



Photo by Historic Ada Station

ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES 1900-1920

STREETCAR TO SUBURBS



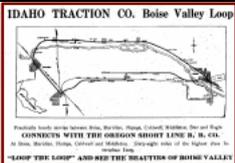
HIS10211

A competing trolley line - The Boise and Interurban Railway - was extended north of the Boise River to Caldwell at about the same time. The line opened the communities Middleton, Star and Eagle to suburban development, and provided a means for local produce to be shipped within the region and beyond.

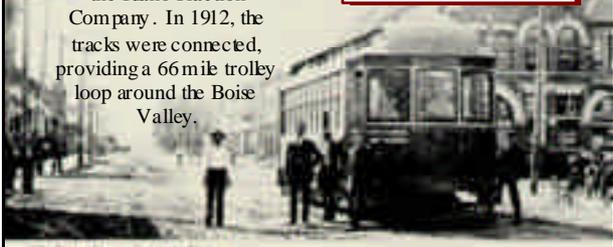
46

ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES 1900-1920

STREETCAR TO SUBURBS

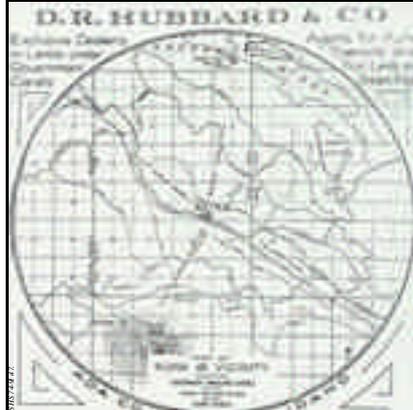


The competing interurban lines were merged to form the Idaho Traction Company. In 1912, the tracks were connected, providing a 66 mile trolley loop around the Boise Valley.



ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES 1900-1920

STREETCAR TO SUBURBS



Kuna blossomed with the anticipated availability of irrigation water. In 1907, F.H. Teed and his brother-in-law D.R. Hubbard filed adjacent land claims, platting the area as orchard tracts. They marketed Kuna's access to the railroad as an enticement for people to homestead the land.

48

Efforts were made to develop other railroad stops in the area into small communities – such as Mora, Pleasant Valley and Orchard - though they were not as successful.



A national agricultural boom during World War I coincided with the completion of Arrowrock Dam in 1915.

Ada County's population expanded rapidly in the early part of the century, leveling off after 1920.



World's tallest dam until the 1930s.

ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES

## RAILS TO PROGRESS

1920-1940

ADA COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION SOCIETY

ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES 1920-1940 RAILS TO PROGRESS

Public domain image.

The 1924 completion of the Capitol Boulevard plan preceded a new Mission Revival Depot in 1925, and construction of a new bridge over the Boise River in 1931. The bridge commemorates the pioneers of the Old Oregon Trail and is located on the site of an Oregon Trail ferry.

53

ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES 1920-1940 RAILS TO PROGRESS

The 1924 Capitol Boulevard Plan came about as the result of the American City Beautiful Movement.

Some portions of the plan were eventually realized, including a simplified depot hill approach.

53

ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES 1920-1940 RAILS TO PROGRESS

During the 1920s transportation improvements continued to shape Ada County. In 1925, direct passenger train service was initiated on a new rail line that originated near the abandoned town of Orchard.

54



Mass production had made cars affordable, but roads were inadequate. In the 1880s, cyclist's demands for better roads led to a national political movement, the Good Roads Movement. This resulted in the paving of many local roads. The Federal Highway Act of 1921 led to construction of two-lane interstate highways, and the era of the automobile was in full bloom.



By 1928, more flexible transportation alternatives resulted in the end of the Valley's trolley system, though the tracks were used for several more years to haul freight to the railyards.



Established in 1926, US Highway 30, also known as the Old Oregon Trail Highway, was the first interstate highway through Boise. Development naturally followed along this route, opening up suburban development in new areas.

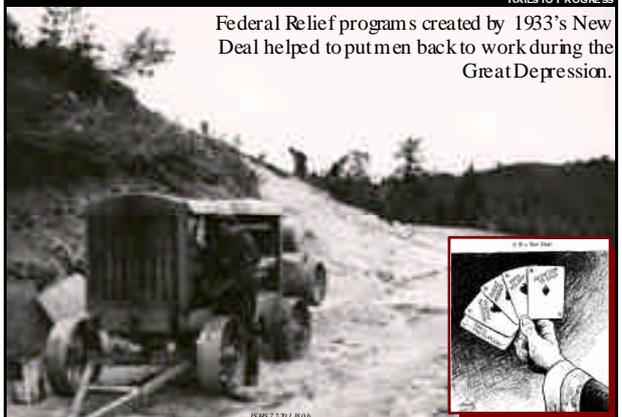


Learning from its struggles to obtain rail service, Boise was quick to embrace air transportation. An airstrip, Booth Field, was located between downtown and the train depot, adjacent to Capitol Boulevard. On April 6, 1926, Varney Air Lines initiated the first airmail service in the United States on a Pasco - Boise - Elko run, marking the beginnings of United Airlines.



The airport quickly outgrew its riverfront location, so a new site, Whitney Field, was selected beyond the New York Canal to the south. Operations commenced in 1938.

In 1939, the old airport site became the home of Boise Junior College, which is now Boise State University.



Federal Relief programs created by 1933's New Deal helped to put men back to work during the Great Depression.



In Ada County, this included constructing Bogus Basin Road and the Ada County courthouse, plus other public works improvements, such as sewer systems for Meridian and Kuna.



After the road was completed, the Bogus Basin ski area quickly became one of the area's major attractions. With the later backing of J.R. Simplot and Harry Morrison, it eventually grew to be one of the largest community owned and operated ski areas in the nation.



The Farm Credit and Agricultural Adjustment Acts of 1933 revived Ada County farming operations by helping farmers secure new loans and get better price supports for their crops.



And in 1934, the Federal Housing Administration made guaranteed home mortgage loans available, encouraging construction of new homes in the late 1930s...



...such as these in Rose Park (above) and Resseguié (left).

ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES

**POST-WAR DEVELOPMENT**

**1940-1960**

ADA COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COUNCIL

Source: Idaho Military History Museum

ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES 1940-1960 POST WAR DEVELOPMENT

The fall of France in 1940 led to a dramatic expansion of the Army Air Corps. Whitney Field became home to a bomber training and assembly base during WWII. It was renamed Gowen Field in honor of Lt. Paul Gowen of Caldwell, who was killed in action in Panama.

**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** **1940-1960**  
POST WAR DEVELOPMENT



The 1939 Federal Reclamation Act led to projects to create more water storage, also creating needed jobs. It provided funding for Anderson Ranch Dam on Boise's south fork.

The dam was intended to increase irrigation, produce power and control flooding for the Treasure Valley and southwest Idaho. Started in 1941, completion was delayed until 1951 due to the War.



Source: Idaho Department of Water Resources  
Staff Map

**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** **1940-1960**  
POST WAR DEVELOPMENT

Also during these years Joe Albertson opened his first grocery store in Boise in 1939, marking the beginning of Albertson's Supermarkets. J.R. Simplot started processing potatoes in Caldwell in 1941. Both Albertson's and Simplot are among the area's largest employers.



**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** **1940-1960**  
POST WAR DEVELOPMENT



During the 1950s Boise grew to the south, on the benches above the Boise River. Development followed Orchard Road, which had been paved to improve access to Gowen Field.

19572905 A  
69

**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** **1940-1960**  
POST WAR DEVELOPMENT



After the War, growth returned to the smaller towns of Ada County, with agriculture providing the chief sources of income.

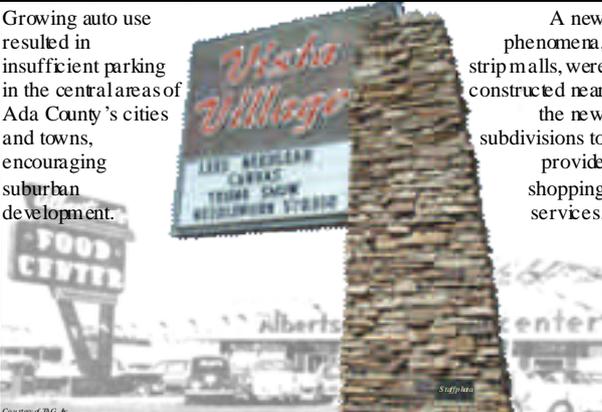
At the time, Meridian claimed the most milk cows per square mile of settled area in Idaho.

19572909 A  
70

**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** **1940-1960**  
POST WAR DEVELOPMENT

Growing auto use resulted in insufficient parking in the central areas of Ada County's cities and towns, encouraging suburban development.

A new phenomena, strip malls, were constructed near the new subdivisions to provide shopping services.

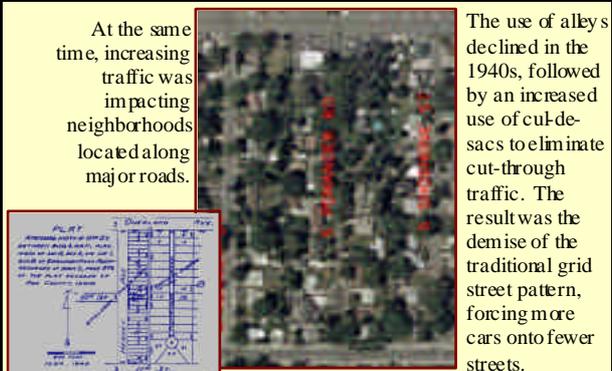


Courtesy of B.C. & Staff Map

**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** **1940-1960**  
POST WAR DEVELOPMENT

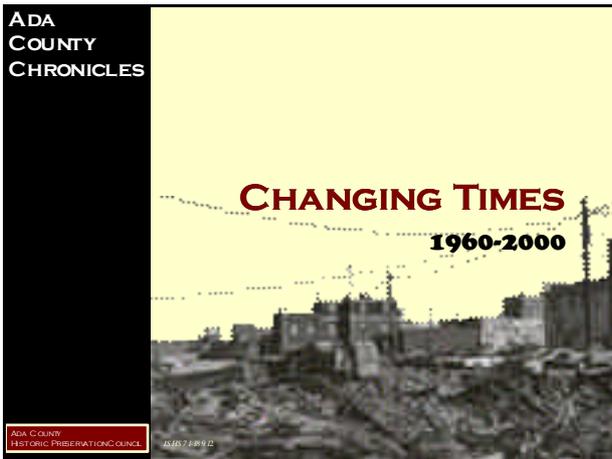
At the same time, increasing traffic was impacting neighborhoods located along major roads.

The use of alleys declined in the 1940s, followed by an increased use of cul-de-sacs to eliminate cut-through traffic. The result was the demise of the traditional grid street pattern, forcing more cars onto fewer streets.



**Eagleson Park Subdivision, 1946**

72



ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES **1960-2000**  
CHANGING TIMES

By 1960, growth in the suburbs led to the majority of Boise's population living outside of city limits. In 1961, Boise's charter was replaced with municipal government as a regular first class city.

This made it easier for Boise to expand its boundaries. By 1962, the city had taken in 50,000 new citizens.

ISIS 60892

ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES **1960-2000**  
CHANGING TIMES

ISIS P98122b

In the 1960s, the results of the 1956 Federal Highway Act were tangible. By the end of the decade I-80N (now I-84) would be completed through Ada County, encouraging growth in Meridian and unincorporated Ada County.

75

ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES **1960-2000**  
CHANGING TIMES

In the mid-1960s, deciding how the freeway would connect to downtown Boise was a contentious issue with significant consequences for the region's future. Three alternatives for the freeway design were studied...

ISIS 60892

ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES **1960-2000**  
CHANGING TIMES

ISIS vertical file

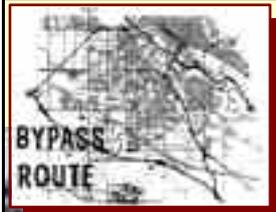
*River Bypass Route*

The River Route proposed a freeway that paralleled the Boise River. It would have created noise for parks and residences in the area, and created a negative aesthetic impact on downtown Boise by obscuring the vista along Capitol Boulevard between the Capitol and the Depot.

77

ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES **1960-2000**  
CHANGING TIMES

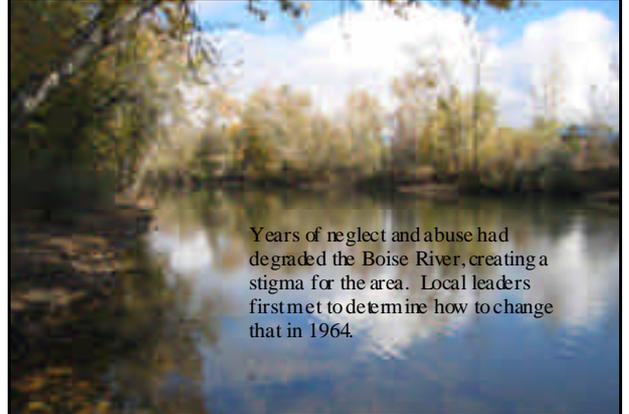
The Railroad Route would have followed the existing Union Pacific passenger tracks through town, though passenger service to Boise did not end until 1997. The proposal would have likely marred one of Boise's key landmarks, the Union Pacific Depot.



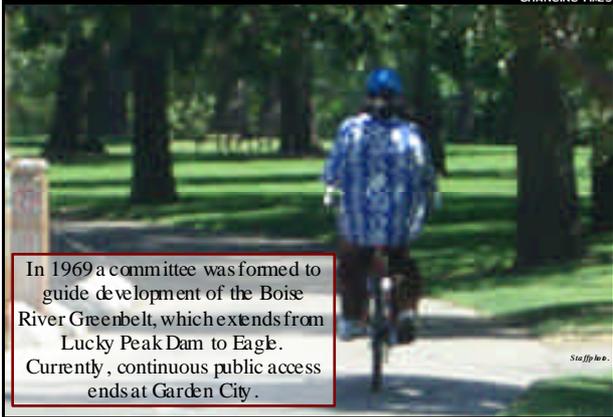
In the end, the Bypass Route concept was selected. The project would be constructed in phases over the coming decades as funds became available.



Photograph by Ron Ward.



Years of neglect and abuse had degraded the Boise River, creating a stigma for the area. Local leaders first met to determine how to change that in 1964.



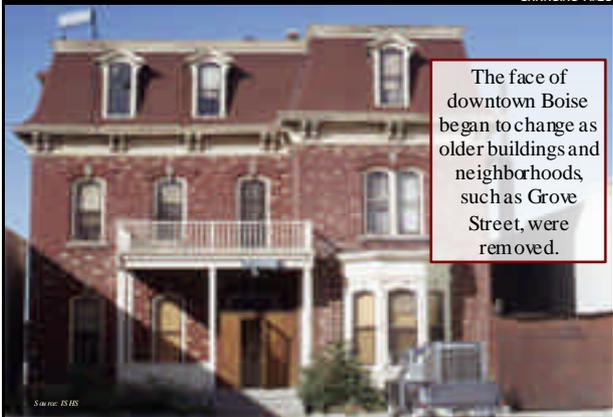
In 1969 a committee was formed to guide development of the Boise River Greenbelt, which extends from Lucky Peak Dam to Eagle. Currently, continuous public access ends at Garden City.

Staff photo.



In the mid 1960s an urban renewal plan was implemented for revitalizing and rebuilding Boise's downtown. The Boise Redevelopment Agency (BRA) was established to oversee reconstruction of the core area.

BSU Archives' Photo Collection/Staff photo.



The face of downtown Boise began to change as older buildings and neighborhoods, such as Grove Street, were removed.

Source: ISHS



Many historically significant buildings in Boise's second Chinatown were also demolished to make way for a planned shopping mall.



ISHS 72573

City of Boise Development Department

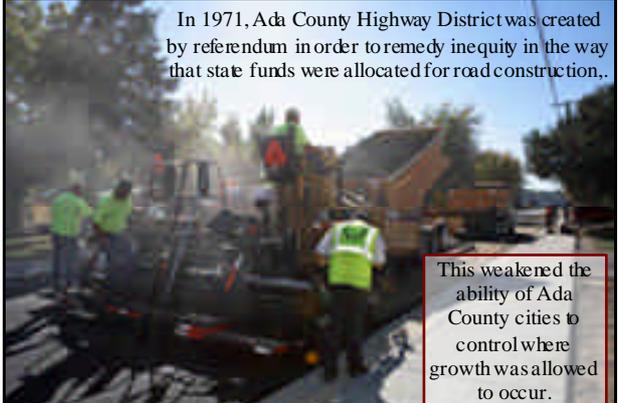
**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** **1960-2000**  
CHANGING TIMES



Public concern over the loss of historic buildings generated interest in historic preservation. In 1976, Boise created a commission to preserve and protect the city's heritage.

Source: IS 18

**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** **1960-2000**  
CHANGING TIMES



In 1971, Ada County Highway District was created by referendum in order to remedy inequity in the way that state funds were allocated for road construction.

This weakened the ability of Ada County cities to control where growth was allowed to occur.

Source: Ada County Highway District

**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** **1960-2000**  
CHANGING TIMES



Boise began to attract new businesses. In 1973 Hewlett Packard opened an Ada County plant. To foster this sort of development, a new Technical Industrial zone was established to separate such uses from incompatible industrial and commercial uses.



87

**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** **1960-2000**  
CHANGING TIMES



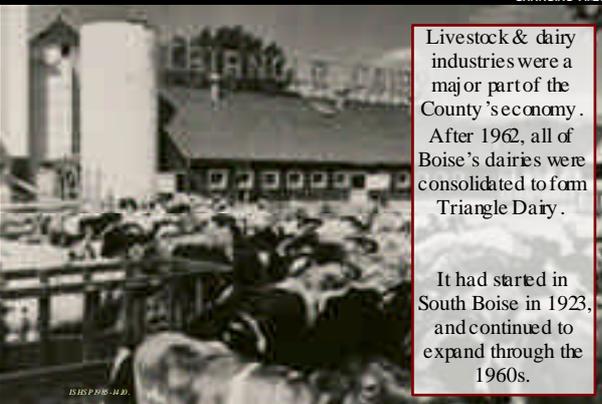
Morrison-Knudsen (now WGI), a large construction and engineering firm, built a headquarters complex and centralized its international management operations in Ada County.

Albertsons, Ore-Ida and Idaho Power were other major employers at the time.



88

**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** **1960-2000**  
CHANGING TIMES



Livestock & dairy industries were a major part of the County's economy. After 1962, all of Boise's dairies were consolidated to form Triangle Dairy.

It had started in South Boise in 1923, and continued to expand through the 1960s.

Source: IS 18

**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** **1960-2000**  
CHANGING TIMES



In 1973, a subsidiary company was formed to convert Triangle's dairy pastures from hay fields to housing. The 10-year project called for the construction of 1,900 homes in several planned developments complete with apartments, houses, and park and recreation amenities.

This was Boise's first master planned community, which created a walkable community with more parks and open space than typical development.

89



In the late 1970s, River Run became the pilot planned unit development project for the area, introducing a new tool for allowing the best use of unique sites. In 1990 it received an Award of Excellence from the Urban Land Institute for residential development.

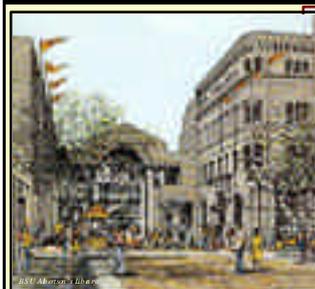


The project also pioneered the idea of public-private partnerships. Partnering with public agencies, the developers built a flood relief channel to re-route the floodway, preserved wildlife habitat and helped extend Greenbelt pathways.

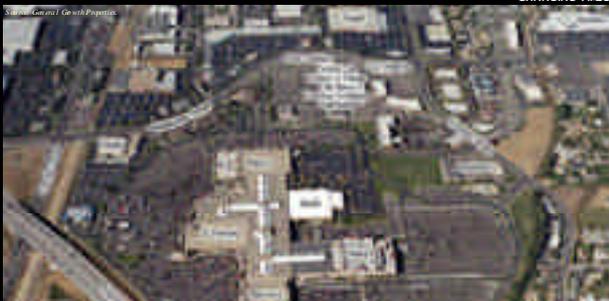


In 1978, another major employer was established in Ada County – Micron.

Micron's success has led to expansion of higher education in the region and increased support for community events and programs.



In the 1980s, downtown plans were changed. While a mall was still the central concept, the new plan sought to retain many of the historic buildings in the area.



In 1988, plans for a downtown shopping mall were dropped and a long-awaited shopping mall, Boise Towne Square Mall, opened west of Boise to serve an expanding population and a region consisting of Ada and Canyon counties, eastern Oregon and northern Nevada.



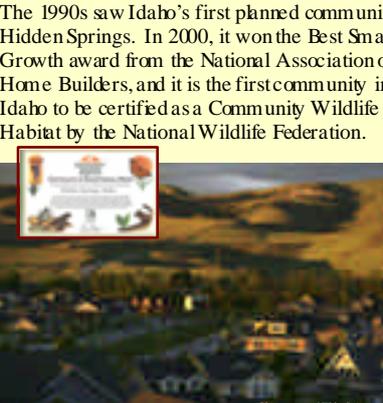
The focus of downtown redevelopment shifted to building a convention center and office space. This was facilitated by "The Connector's" promise of easy access from the freeway.

But some of the original concepts for downtown redevelopment endured, including the central fountain on The Grove.



**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** **1960-2000**  
CHANGING TIMES

The 1990s saw Idaho's first planned community, Hidden Springs. In 2000, it won the Best Smart Growth award from the National Association of Home Builders, and it is the first community in Idaho to be certified as a Community Wildlife Habitat by the National Wildlife Federation.



Planned communities seek to knit residents together through employment, recreation and social programming. They provide a mix of housing, employment and significant amounts of open space.

97

**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** DESIGNING THE FUTURE

*"Our duty is to preserve what the past has had to say for itself, and to say for ourselves what shall be true for the future."*

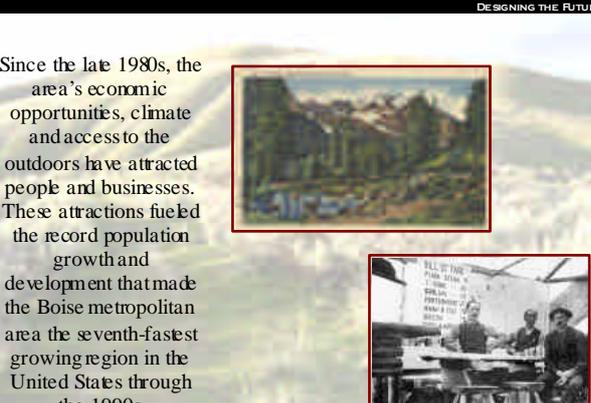
**- JOHN RUSKIN**



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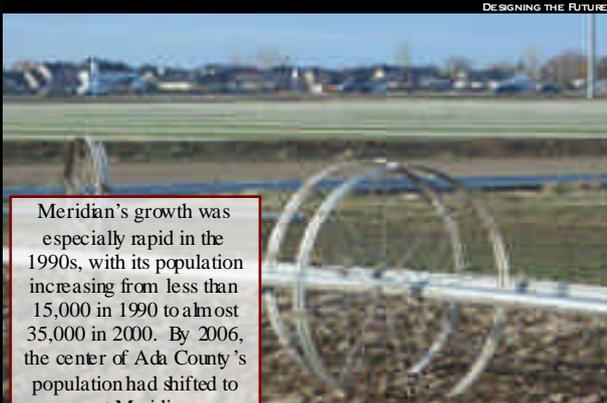
**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** DESIGNING THE FUTURE

Since the late 1980s, the area's economic opportunities, climate and access to the outdoors have attracted people and businesses. These attractions fueled the record population growth and development that made the Boise metropolitan area the seventh-fastest growing region in the United States through the 1990s.



**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** DESIGNING THE FUTURE

Meridian's growth was especially rapid in the 1990s, with its population increasing from less than 15,000 in 1990 to almost 35,000 in 2000. By 2006, the center of Ada County's population had shifted to east Meridian.

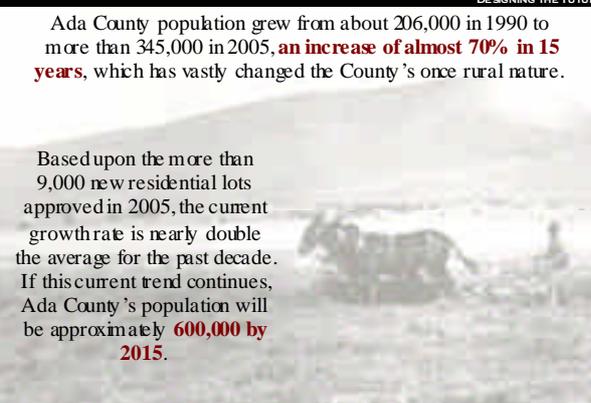


Source: BIR

**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** DESIGNING THE FUTURE

Ada County population grew from about 206,000 in 1990 to more than 345,000 in 2005, **an increase of almost 70% in 15 years**, which has vastly changed the County's once rural nature.

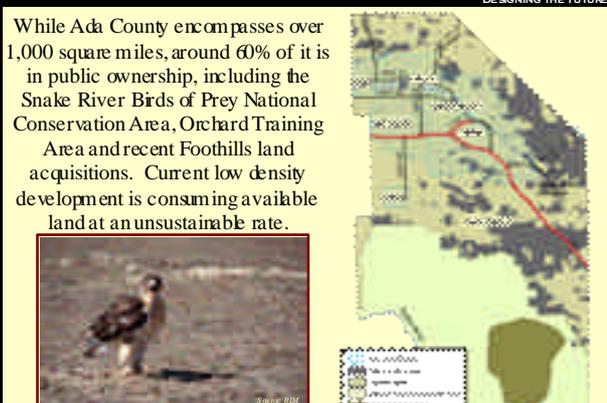
Based upon the more than 9,000 new residential lots approved in 2005, the current growth rate is nearly double the average for the past decade. If this current trend continues, Ada County's population will be approximately **600,000 by 2015**.



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**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** DESIGNING THE FUTURE

While Ada County encompasses over 1,000 square miles, around 60% of it is in public ownership, including the Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area, Orchard Training Area and recent Foothills land acquisitions. Current low density development is consuming a valuable land at an unsustainable rate.



Source: BIR

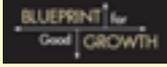
103

**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** DESIGNING THE FUTURE

Communities in Motion and Blueprint for Good Growth are planning processes aimed at creating a sustainable future that assures livable communities that retain natural and historic values, while providing urban amenities and a distinct sense of place.



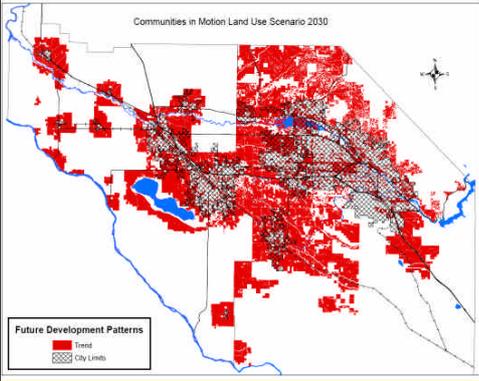
Communities in Motion is a long range transportation plan for six counties in southwest Idaho that is aimed at meeting the region's transportation needs for the next 25 years.



Blueprint for Good Growth is a consortium of Ada County governments attempting coordinated land use and transportation plans that assure the County's orderly and mutually beneficial growth.

104

**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** DESIGNING THE FUTURE



Communities in Motion Land Use Scenario 2030

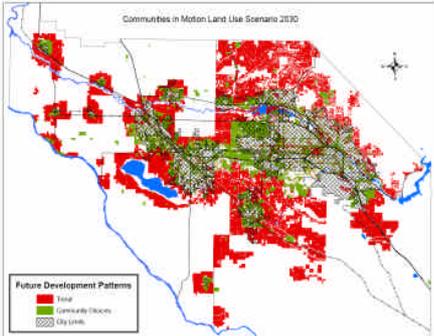
Future Development Patterns  
■ Forest  
 City Limits

This of Ada and Canyon Counties shows the amount of land (in red) that would be consumed by development under current growth trends and development patterns.

105

**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** DESIGNING THE FUTURE

An alternative "Community Choices" development pattern was created from extensive public participation (shown in green). This scenario conserves considerable amounts of land and public services are concentrated, resulting in lower costs for taxpayers.



Communities in Motion Land Use Scenario 2030

Future Development Patterns  
■ Forest  
■ Community Choices  
 City Limits

106

**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** DESIGNING THE FUTURE

### Ada County *Past, Present, and Future.....*



How can Ada County's history provide guidance for future growth and development?

1. Interconnected open space and wildlife corridors
2. Accessible and developed open space along waterway s/slopes
3. Historic settlement patterns: hamlet, village, town, & city
4. New towns & cities emerging from rural roots
5. High-density, mixed use, walkable town centers & downtowns

107

**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** DESIGNING THE FUTURE

### INTERCONNECTED NATURAL OPEN SPACES

Provide Preservation, Recreation and Wildlife Habitat Enhancement & Corridors



**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** DESIGNING THE FUTURE

### DEVELOPED OPEN SPACE & AMENITIES

Provide Community Gathering Areas, plus Active and Passive Recreation



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## RURAL HAMLET

Community Stables/Arens - Organic Gardens/Orchards - Local Fams and Cooperatives

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## COUNTRY VILLAGE

Creates a "Sense of Place" - Encourages Walkability - is Socially Sustainable

**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** DESIGNING THE FUTURE

## URBAN TOWN & CITY

Walkable Neighborhoods - Variety of Housing Options - Vibrant Economic Sustainability

**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** DESIGNING THE FUTURE

## VIBRANT MIXED-USE TOWN CENTERS & DOWNTOWNS

Encourage Urban Infill - Redevelopment in existing downtowns, plus create mixed-use town centers in new planned communities.

Westside District - Boise

River/Myrtle Street District

**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** DESIGNING THE FUTURE

## MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

A number of current planning processes could facilitate development of rapid transit in the Boise Valley. By incorporating transit oriented development principles in these plans, it becomes possible to achieve densities that make rapid transit pay for itself. Examples are Meridian's Ten Mile Interchange Subarea Plan and a number of planned community proposals.

- Regio-Spinner
- Hybrid-Electric Bus
- Bike Paths
- Electric Cars
- Pedestrian-Friendly

**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES** DESIGNING THE FUTURE

*Urban Infill* and *Planned Communities* promote mixed-use, mixed-density clustered development footprints with these sustainable development benefits:

- NATURAL AND DEVELOPED INTERCONNECTED OPEN SPACE
- ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL, & ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY
- DEVELOPER FUNDED MITIGATION & PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS
- LIVE-WORK-PLAY ENVIRONMENTS: JOBS, HOUSING, AMENITIES
- DIVERSITY OF HOUSING OPTIONS & LIFESTYLE COMMUNITIES

**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES**

DESIGNING THE FUTURE

Over its 140 year history, Ada County has accumulated the experience to deal with the issues that face our community. This includes public and private partnerships to ensure planned growth that is beneficial, economically viable and retains the quality of life that has attracted residents to the valley for more than a century.



116

**ADA COUNTY CHRONICLES**



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117

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- Ada County Development Services Staff

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119