

# 2025 HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN FOR ADA COUNTY CULTURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES



ADA COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COUNCIL  
JULY 29, 2025

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this historic preservation plan is to identify Ada County's vision, goals, and strategies for protecting and preserving Ada County's historic resources. This plan is a policy document that will guide historic preservation efforts in Ada County over the next ten (10) years. The plan emphasizes the importance of protecting historic resources to maintain Ada County's unique character and identity.

This plan is divided into a series of sections that present an overview of historic preservation in Ada County along with goals, objectives, and strategies to move historic preservation forward in the next ten (10) years.

1. **Ada County's Story:** Provides the history of Ada County and gives context of how Ada County's past has shaped its present state and will continue to influence its future. This section starts on page 10.
2. **Historic Property Types:** Identifies the variety of historic property types found in Ada County. This section starts on page 40.
3. **Current State of Historic Preservation in Ada County:** Analyzes the current state of historic preservation in Ada County. Identifies past preservation activities that have occurred in Ada County and highlights the public's view of historic preservation in Ada County. This section starts on page 47.
4. **2024 Survey:** A summary of the community survey questions and its results. This section starts on page 48.
5. **Ada County Goals and Objectives:** As the name implies, these are the goals and objectives for historic preservation in Ada County. This section starts on page 50.
6. **Strategies for Ada County:** Identification of strategies of how the Ada County Historic Preservation Council can improve their work in preserving Ada County's historic sites and resources. This section starts on page 53.
7. **Appendix A & B:** Includes the full community survey results (Appendix A), information on historic preservation law, and identifies partners in historic preservation (Appendix B). This section starts on page 63.

## INTRODUCTION

Located in southwestern Idaho is Ada County. While Ada County is not the largest of the 44 counties in Idaho, as it has less than two percent of the total land area in the state, it is home the largest population of all of the counties in the state. In 2024, there were 557,590 people living in Ada County.<sup>1</sup> A majority of the population lives in the northern part of the county. In addition to the capital city of Boise, Ada County has five smaller cities: Eagle, Garden City, Kuna, Meridian, and Star. Early in the 1900s irrigation was brought to the county which caused the county to bloom with agriculture in this northern portion while the southern portion of the county has remained largely undeveloped.<sup>2</sup>

For many years local residents identified historic sites of importance in the various towns of the county and passed on the history to the next generation. Nonetheless, by the 1960s with the spread of Urban Renewal and the development of the highway systems, historic sites of importance fell under great threat with many being destroyed. The passage of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 was a response to Urban Renewal which created the National Register of Historic Places (National Register), followed by many other preservation programs, which gave preservationists the tools to help preserve America's and Ada County's history. In 1988 the Ada County Historic Preservation Council (Council) was created "to preserve and enhance cultural and historic sites throughout Ada County and to increase awareness of the value of historic preservation to citizens and local businesses." In 2024, the Council conducted a public survey of Ada County residents to best identify those issues which are affecting historic resources in the county since the last survey was done in 2006. From this survey, a plan for the next ten (10) years has been developed within this document.

## PURPOSE OF THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN

In Idaho, preservation planning is a valuable tool to help identify and safeguard historic resources and community character that are important to all Idahoans. When this plan is incorporated into long range planning efforts "Idaho communities affirm the value of their local heritage—from pioneer-era buildings to cultural landscapes shaped by generations of residents."<sup>3</sup>

A preservation plan assists planners, developers, property owners, historic preservation councils, and preservationists in defining shared goals for protecting their local history in how resources are identified, legislation is created or enforced, and incentives are established to help find ways for communities to grow and prosper while protecting, restoring, rehabilitating and adaptively re-using these irreplaceable historic places that have a visible and tangible connection to the past.

## IMPORTANCE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The Council finds that historic preservation is important to understanding Ada County's past as well as shaping its future through the following:

- It provides character to our communities and differentiates us from Anywhere, U.S.A.
- It showcases the unique and varied architecture found in Ada County.
- It tells the stories of the people who settled or left an impact on Ada County.
- It is a visual representation to past historical events and time periods.

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<sup>1</sup> Ada County, 2024, "Ada County Population", 1.

<sup>2</sup> Ada County, "History of Ada County" <https://adacounty.id.gov/historicpreservation/history-of-ada-county/> Accessed January 17, 2025.

<sup>3</sup> Idaho State Historical Society, "Certified Local Government" <https://history.idaho.gov/clg/>. Accessed on April 30, 2025.

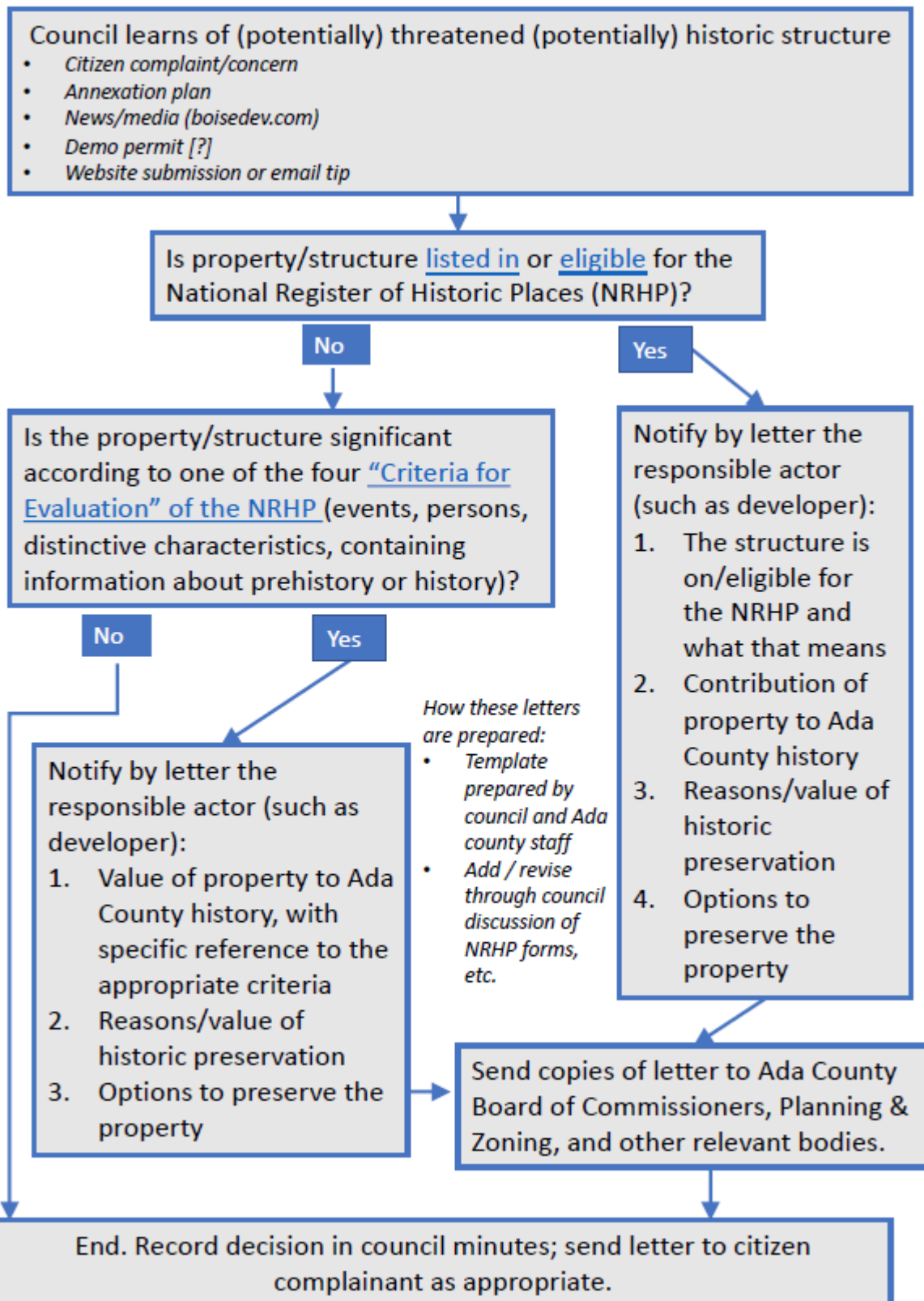
- It educates the community on our history, from where we have been to where we are going.
- It provides economic development opportunities by attracting people to visit Ada County and support our local businesses.
- It fosters heritage tourism which provides an identity of place for the community and where visitors can experience a different era and way of life.
- It promotes sustainability through the reuse of existing structures.

The focus of the County's historic preservation efforts has varied. The primary focus has been on historic sites and resources within unincorporated Ada County. Attention and efforts have been made on identifying historic resources associated with Ada County's agricultural heritage as well as the Oregon Trail, which runs through Ada County. Surveys have been undertaken to identify historic farmsteads and agricultural structures. Thematic surveys associated with Ada County's agricultural heritage have also been undertaken. In 2014, a survey was done to ascertain the eligibility of three grange halls for their inclusion in the National Register.

In recent years, the Council has made efforts to partner with other historic groups and certified local governments (CLG's). The Council invites other historic groups to their monthly meetings and keeps them apprised of what is happening in Ada County. The Council finds that these partnerships have been rewarding as they have gained new insights and knowledge from them. In addition, they have also been able to work with other CLG's to advocate for the preservation of historic structures. The County has also done a survey for historic resources in a community within Ada County that is not a CLG. In 2021 and 2022, a survey was completed identifying historic properties along the State Street corridor in Garden City.

The Council has noticed that recent growth within Ada County and its sister cities could threaten historic buildings/structures as properties are developed into other uses. They have created a flowchart of what to do when they discover that a historic building or structure is potentially threatened. In addition, they have created a letter template informing property owners of historic buildings/structures about the benefits of retaining the historic building/structure on the property.





Flowchart of Potentially Threatened Historic Structures

## SECTION 1: HISTORIC CONTEXT

### PRE-CONTACT THROUGH TERRITORIAL SETTLEMENT ERA (PRE-CONTACT TO 1889)

#### NATIVE AMERICANS

Long before Idaho was a State or Territory the Boise Valley was part of the homeland for the Paiute, Shoshone, and Bannock tribes. These nomadic bands of Native Americans travelled throughout southern Idaho, eastern Oregon, and northern Nevada while residing in the Boise River Valley in the summer. In Shoshoni the Boise River Valley was called *Suhi Woki* meaning “willows in multiple rows.”<sup>4</sup>

The Bannock, Paiute, and Shoshone tribes, frequented the tree lined Boise River to access resources of fish, vegetable roots, and grasses. Natural hot springs were also used by the tribes for healing rituals. Other nomadic tribes such as the Nez Perce came through the valley to access these resources. While in the Boise River Valley the Bannock, Paiute and Shoshone tribes did not fight amongst themselves or with other tribes and so this area became to be known as “Peace Valley”. This peaceful coexistence remained until the 1800s when things began to change when new people came into the valley.<sup>5</sup>

#### EURO-AMERICAN EXPLORATION AND MIGRATION

In 1811, Wilson Price Hunt, who was employed by John Jacob Astor’s Astoria Company, crossed overland through southern Idaho on his way to what would eventually become Fort Astoria on the Columbia River. This started the era of fur traders, trappers and explorers. Trappers and hunters of the Hudson Bay Company during this time also came through looking for beavers along the Boise and Snake Rivers. Eventually, Hudson Bay Company became the dominate non-Native American force in the Pacific Northwest and established Fort Boise in 1834.<sup>6</sup> Starting in 1840, more Euro-Americans came to the Boise Valley on their way to the Pacific Coast when the Oregon Trail became passible for wagons. The way of life for the Bannock, Paiute, and Shoshone nomadic tribes changed with the new people coming in and through the valley. Life in Peace Valley was no longer peaceful when tensions grew between the tribes and these emigrants who were all vying for the same natural resources. Fights and wars occurred, with the largest being the Ward Massacre in 1854 near Caldwell. Hudson Bay Company abandoned Fort Boise that same year. Tensions continued to arise, but southwestern Idaho was not really settled by Euro-Americans until gold was found in 1862 in the Boise Basin near the headwaters of the Boise River. The growth of the population of emigrants and miners prompted the United States (U.S.) Government, who by then owned Idaho Territory, to establish a new Fort Boise in 1863. As with other parts of the West the presence of the military was a foreshadowing of the movement of Native American tribes out of their traditional lands. From the 1860s-1870s the Shoshone, Bannock and Paiute were forcibly relocated onto reservations in Duck Valley or Fort Hall and out of the Boise River Valley.<sup>7</sup>

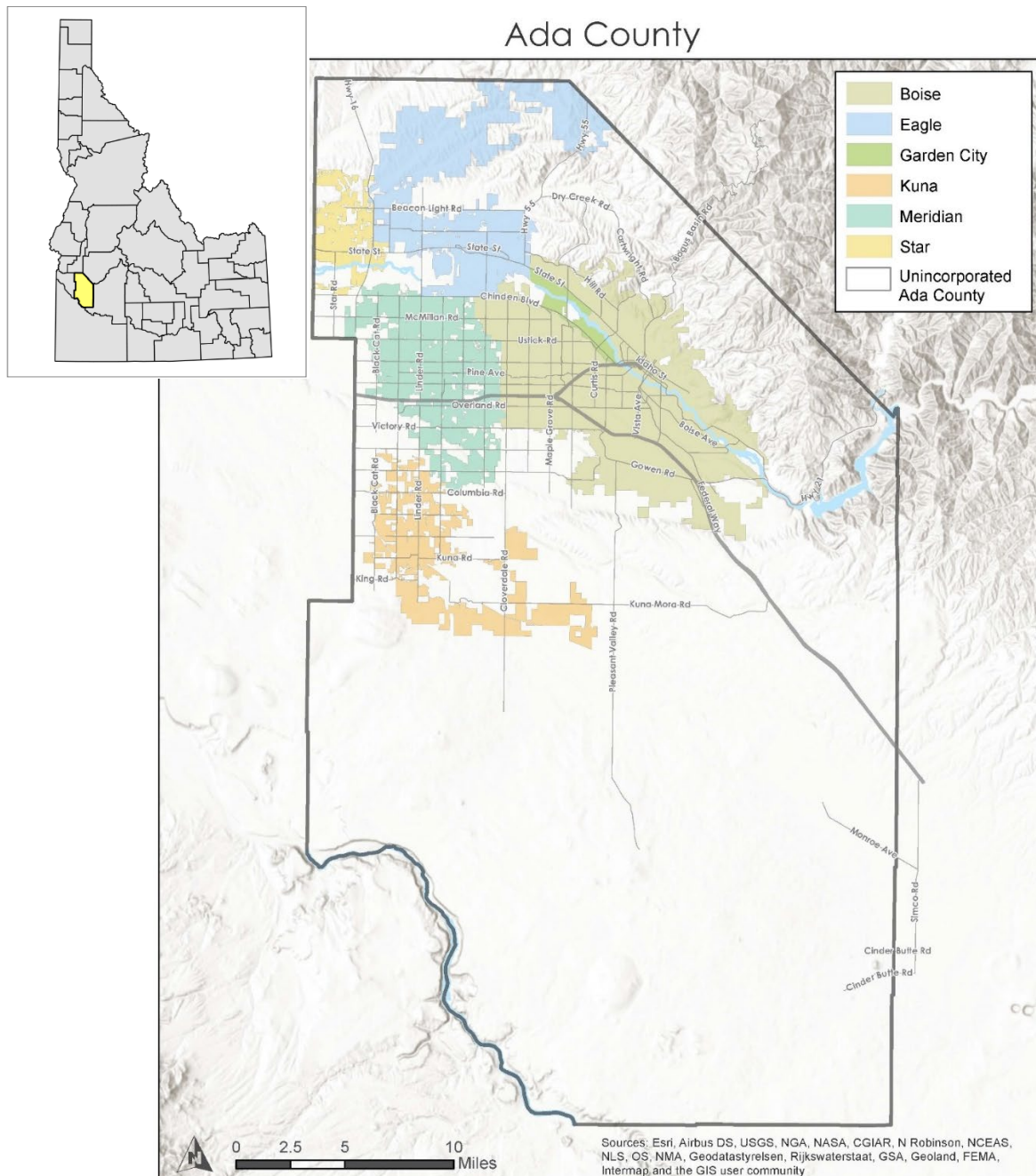
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<sup>4</sup> Ada County, 2017, Ada County Student Workbook [Draft], 3.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Idaho State University, “Digital Atlas of Idaho”, 40-41, <https://digitalatlas.cose.isu.edu/geog/rrt/part3/chp4/40.htm> & <https://digitalatlas.cose.isu.edu/geog/rrt/part3/chp4/41.htm>. Accessed January 23, 2025.

<sup>7</sup> Ada County, 2017, 3; Paul L. Murphy, “Early Irrigation in the Boise Valley”, *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, XLIV (October 1935): 178, Seattle, Washington: University of Washington.



**Map of Ada County 2025 with the location of the county within Idaho.**

## OREGON TRAIL

In the period from 1840 to 1860, there were thousands of emigrants who passed through southern Idaho on the Oregon Trail on their way to seek a new life on fertile lands of the Pacific Coast. The trail started in Independence, Missouri and ended 2,170 miles later in Oregon City, Oregon. There were other trails that branched off to California and Washington from this trail, but a majority of the people were going to the Willamette Valley and passed through Ada County.

Most of the Oregon Trail route in Idaho mainly followed the Snake River Plain which was a high desert environment of sagebrush with nary a tall tree in sight. The timing of travel on the Oregon Trail would put these emigrants crossing Idaho during the months of July and August when it was the hottest and driest. The emigrants entered present day Ada County about 10 miles east of Boise when they passed over Bonneville Point. From this high point they could see the green oasis of the cottonwood-lined Boise River which provided the same resting place and water for their animals that the Bannock, Paiute, and Shoshone used. Emigrants continued on to Oregon after resting along the tall cottonwoods of the Boise River and did not stay permanently in the Boise Valley until the gold rush of the 1860s.

These emigrants followed the tree-lined Boise River until they reconnected back with the Snake River at the border of present-day Oregon and Idaho. Some portions of the Oregon Trail and its other offshoot trails are now part of Ada County's major transportation corridors following or are physically on top of parts of these trails, such as Boise Avenue, State Street, Chinden Boulevard and Hill Road. There are still visible remnants of the Oregon Trail in Ada County which are listed in the National Register.<sup>8</sup>

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## GOLD & FORT BOISE

As with many western states, it was gold and the lure of gold that forever changed the area of southern Idaho. In 1862, precious metal was found in the Boise Basin and settlers came to work in the gold fields, mines, and populate the area. The gold rush brought over 20,000 people to the Boise Basin at its peak. The largest city in the Boise Basin was Idaho City which grew to more than 6,000 people. However, by 1870, the rush had ended and the population boom in this area was short-lived with the population of Idaho City falling to just a few hundred people.<sup>9</sup>

This rush created more involvement of the U.S. Government in the newly created Idaho Territory with the building of Fort Boise in 1863. This Federal fort was in a new location where the prior Hudson Bay Company Fort Boise had been. This new fort was built to protect emigrant travel routes and mining roads and was at the intersection of the Oregon Trail and the Silver Trail. The Silver Trail led to the gold rush towns of Idaho City to the northeast and Silver City in the Owyhee Mountains to the southeast.<sup>10</sup>

While the gold rush was still active in 1869 all of Block 35 was donated by Alexander Rossi for an U.S. Assay Office building (National Register Ref# 66000305) at "one of the best locations in town even though it was rather far from the business district."<sup>11</sup> Having an assay office in Idaho Territory made it easier for miners to have their ore assayed instead of transporting their gold to the U.S. Mint in San Francisco, California. This two-story Assay Office was built of local Boise sandstone in 1870-1871 in the middle of Block 35 that is bounded by Main, Idaho, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Streets. By the 1930s the massive need for having a U.S. Assay Office in Boise had waned and 1933 the U.S. Forest Service then occupied the building until 1972 when the Idaho State Historical Society (ISHS) took over ownership. It was listed in the National Register in 1980 and is home to the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Merle Wells, 1972, "Oregon Trail National Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination Form." On file at Idaho State Historic Preservation Office, Boise, Idaho.

<sup>9</sup> Idaho State Historical Society, "The Effect of Mining in the Economy of the Boise Region", Reference Series Number 172, Boise, Idaho: Idaho State Historical Society, 1-2.

<sup>10</sup> Ada County, 2017, 12; City of Kuna, "History of Kuna" <https://kunacity.id.gov/195/History-of-Kuna>. Accessed on March 5, 2025.

<sup>11</sup> Blanche Higgins Schroer and Charles W. Snell, 1980, "Assay Office National Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination Form.", 2 & 5.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.



**View of Fort Boise from foothill. ISHS photograph 77-180-2C.**

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## EARLY SETTLEMENT

Euro-American settlement of the area that later would become the State of Idaho came in phases. In the Boise River Valley, the first phase of major settlement came from the Gold Rush of 1862. That same year, the U.S. Government enacted the Homestead Act in 1862 which opened up vast swaths of Federal land, and more people than before started to move west. The Euro-American settlement in the Boise River Valley was centered around lands along the Boise River that the Native American tribes had used. These lands had fertile river bottom soil and easy access to water for irrigation with little effort. Early on settlers realized that supplying the needs of the miners was more profitable than mining for gold for “the high prices offered for hay and provisions – made it evident that ranching and gardening in the vicinity would be very profitable.”<sup>13</sup>

Soon towns started to spring up into what would later become Ada County. The city of Boise was laid out in 1863 with pioneers settling in it, such as John A. O’Farrell who constructed a cabin that year made of hand-hewn cottonwood logs cut down from the Boise River. Many different ethnic groups from Europe, the Eastern part of the U.S., and elsewhere came to area, including the Basque who came from a region located between France and Spain. The Basque are unique people who have their own language but have independent nation state. Many of the Basque who immigrated to America became sheepherders in Idaho, since speaking English was not a requirement. Boise became home to a large Basque population.

The Cryus Jacobs family came to Boise City in 1864 and built a brick house. Cryus was an entrepreneur who had multiple businesses in town and eventually his brick house was sold to the Uberugas to become a boarding house for Basque sheepherders in 1910. The Basque sheepherders would be out with the grazing sheep in the mountains during the summer, but during the winter they would come to town and live in boarding houses. Businesses sprung up along Grove Street to serve the Basque community and that area became a home-away-from home for

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<sup>13</sup> Murphy, “Early Irrigation in the Boise Valley”, 178.





**O'Farrell Cabin. Brent Danielson, 2022.**

the Chinese became well known for their large gardens that were located west of this new town of Boise on land leased from the Tom and Julia Davis Family.<sup>15</sup> In the 20<sup>th</sup> Century this area eventually became known as Garden City, and the main street Chinden Boulevard, which runs through Garden City, was also a combination of the words "Chinese Garden." Boise also had its own Chinatown where a myriad of small Chinese businesses were located, including a Chinese Odd Fellows Building. The two story Chinese Odd Fellows Building (1911), located at 610-612 West Front Street, was a social meeting place for these immigrants, a place of business, a lodge hall, and sleeping rooms all in one building. Today the Chinese Odd Fellows Building (National Register Ref# 82000187) is the only extant Chinatown building designed by Tourtellotte and Hummel architects and it is listed in the National Register.

<sup>16</sup>

them as in these boarding houses they could speak their own language while eating their traditional foods. The Cyrus Jacobs-Uberuaga House at, 607 Grove Street, is listed in the National Register. Even today, Ada County has a large Basque population with the entire state of Idaho having the largest concentrations of Basque people outside the Basque country itself.<sup>14</sup>

A large Chinese population also grew within the Boise Valley due to the large increase of jobs including the railroad and digging irrigation ditches. With this influx of Chinese immigrants many areas within Ada County began to see an increase of restaurants, laundries, hog raising, and gardens in the Chinese communities. As the decades passed by,

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## TRANSPORTATION

While the Oregon Trail was already established by the time gold was discovered in the Boise Basin, most of the country was undeveloped with only primitive trails where one would have to walk, or ride horseback. There were a few other wagon width trails, but there was no dependable service that one could use if you did not have your own wagon. This changed rapidly with the influx of new people into the area as there was now a need for reliable transportation. Ben Holladay established an Overland Stage service in 1864 which provided service to Salt Lake City from Ada County and connected another stagecoach line to Walla Walla and beyond into the State of Oregon and Washington Territory. Holladay's Overland Stage business continued to grow, including starting a new service a few years later that went through the Owyhee Mountains all the way to California.<sup>17</sup>

Holladay's success was defeated when the railroad came to southern Idaho. By 1883, the Oregon Short Line Railroad (OSL) had reached Indian Creek in Ada County and would continue all the way into Oregon where it would connect with the Oregon Washington Railway and Navigation Company to reach Portland, Oregon. Construction camps were set up along the route and the City of Kuna sprang up from one of these locations as the railroad built

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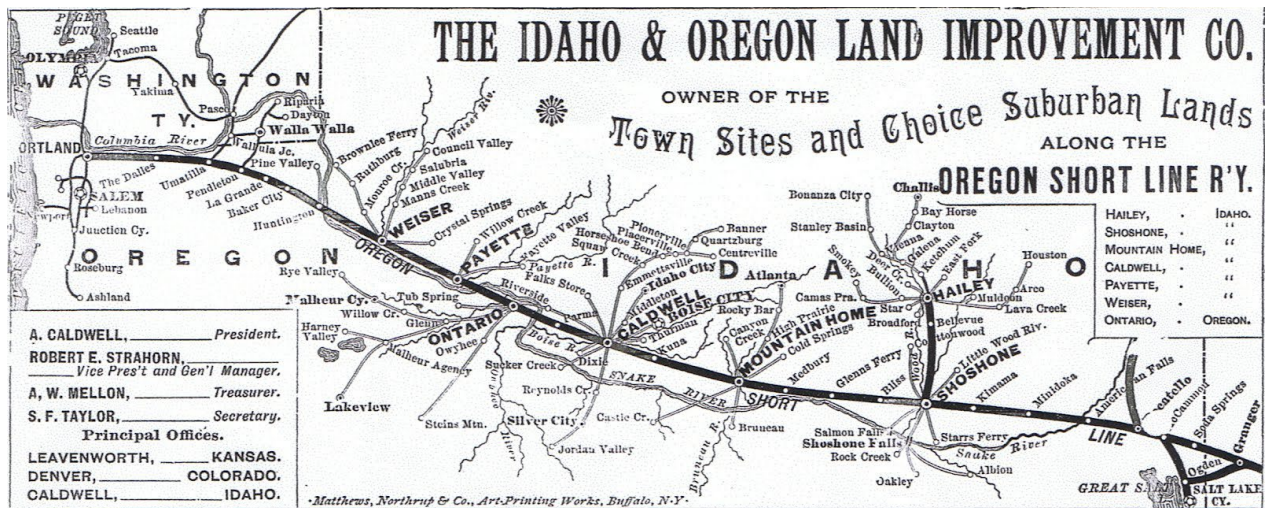
<sup>14</sup> Ada County, 2017, 10.

<sup>15</sup> Garden City, "History of Garden City" <https://gardencityidaho.org/about>. Accessed on March 3, 2025.

<sup>16</sup> Ada County, 2017, 7; Idaho State Historical Society, 1982, "Chinese Odd Fellows Building Inventory Sheet for Group Nominations (National Register Reference #82000187): Idaho Historical Society, Boise, Idaho.

<sup>17</sup> Ada County, 2017, 8.

toward Nampa. Other locations would be developed along the OSL mainline, like the Orchard townsite on the eastern side of Ada County. While Boise City was the largest city in the area the OSL bypassed it due to the geographical benches which would have required a much steeper grade to get into and out of the city for a route with a gentler grade. Boise City would be without a railroad connection until 1887 when the Idaho Central Railroad was completed between Nampa on the OSL and the capitol city. The Idaho Central Railroad also led to settlements of other towns such as Hunter, a mail drop location, which later became Meridian.<sup>18</sup>



Pre-1890 route of OSL, note no branch to Boise City in this drawing.<sup>19</sup>



First train into Boise Idaho September 5, 1887. ISHS photograph 72-139-20.

<sup>18</sup> Ada County, 2017, 9.

<sup>19</sup> Map from <https://steunenber.blogspot.com>.

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## AGRICULTURE & EARLY IRRIGATION

Agriculture got its start in the Boise Valley from the Gold Rush at Idaho City where hungry miners were willing to pay high prices for fresh fruit and vegetables that were not available in the mountain town. In early 1863, Sherlock Bristol, who realized that he could make more money farming and ranching than trying to pan for gold, started staking claims in the valley until a dozen miles on either side of the Boise River had been claimed. The Boise River bottom lands were easy to irrigate with a diversion off the river so crops could be watered in season.<sup>20</sup> In 1863, Pioneer Ditch was started by M.B. Palmer for his Middleton Mill which allowed water from the Boise River to flow west between Star and Middleton and opened up new ground for agriculture.<sup>21</sup> As time went on, more and more water rights were issued, and as with many places in the West, the water was over appropriated. For example, in 1898, 151 claimants asserted the right to 6,361,800 inches of water in the Boise River, but the actual flow of the river was 35,000 inches of water during September.<sup>22</sup> By the 1880s, the growth of agriculture beyond the easy-to-irrigate bottom lands depended on larger engineered irrigation systems and good economical transportation. When the OSR started building through southern Idaho in 1880 a myriad of irrigation projects followed to open up the land for agriculture.<sup>23</sup>

Irrigation systems in this period were small in scale, except for the New York Canal project which was funded by outside investors from New York. Surveys and estimates for the New York Canal started in the spring of 1883, with Arthur Foote and his wife Mary coming in 1884 to engineer the canal and its system. This work continued including small scale construction sporadically on and off through 1891.<sup>24</sup> This would all change with the creation of the U.S. Reclamation Service (USRS) in 1902.<sup>25</sup>



**The Ridenbaugh Canal, southeast Boise. ISHS photograph 75-40.3.**

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<sup>20</sup> Murphy, "Early Irrigation in the Boise Valley", 178.

<sup>21</sup> City of Star, "Agricultural Economy" <https://www.staridaho.org/community/page/agricultural-economy>. Accessed on March 7, 2025.

<sup>22</sup> Murphy, "Early Irrigation in the Boise Valley", 180.

<sup>23</sup> Idaho State Historical Society, "The Effect of Mining in the Economy of the Boise Region", 3.

<sup>24</sup> Ada County, "History of Ada County".

<sup>25</sup> Historic American Engineering Record, "Arrowrock Dam, Boise Vicinity, Boise County, Elmore County, Idaho", HAER No. ID-27, 2013, 17-18.



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## TOWNS (BOISE, STAR, KUNA)

As with the growth of agriculture and settlement during this period, the towns which sprang up in Ada County were those along the Boise River – Boise and Star. The other communities on the benches would not be founded until after the 1900s when more engineered irrigation reached those higher portions of the valley.

**Boise:** The biggest city in Ada County is Boise City, commonly called Boise today.<sup>26</sup> The city was established in 1863, alongside the Boise River at the crossroads of the Oregon Trail and the road to the mines at Idaho City, and the location of the newly established U.S. Fort Boise. It continued to grow in the 1860s as the supply point for the Boise Basin mines of materials and foodstuffs, such as fruits and vegetables which came directly from the fertile bottomlands along the Boise River. In 1864, Boise City was incorporated and eventually became the Idaho Territory capital. The early population of Boise City grew with ups and downs related to this mining boom, as in 1870 the population of Boise City was about 1,000 people, which was down from its high of 1,600 in 1864. Nonetheless, from the start Boise City was the most populous city in Ada County, a title it still retains today.

**Star:** Star, like Boise City, was in the bottomlands of the Boise River and its development was tied with irrigation. In 1863 Pioneer Ditch was started by M.B. Palmer. This ditch allowed water from the Boise River to flow west between Star and Middleton and opened up new virgin ground for agriculture.<sup>27</sup> Star's founding comes from a schoolhouse that was built in the 1870s for the local homesteading families, which had a star on the front door. This schoolhouse became a landmark for travelers coming through the area and from this schoolhouse a town around it developed as a place of commerce for farmers and ranchers, although Star did not incorporate until 1905.<sup>28</sup>



Star's First School, built 1870s, was moved into the town of Star in 1887. ISHS photograph 2179.

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<sup>26</sup> City of Boise, "Boise History FAQs" <https://www.boiseartsandhistory.org/programs/boise-history/boise-history-faqs/> Accessed June 3, 2025. For purposes of this document the history pre-1900 refers to Boise as Boise City as after that time publications drop the "city" portion in reference to the capitol city.

<sup>27</sup> City of Star, "Agricultural Economy".

<sup>28</sup> City of Star, "History of Star" <https://www.staridaho.org/community/page/history-star>. Accessed on March 7, 2025.

**Kuna:** Unlike the other two towns in Ada County that formed during this period, Kuna had its founding due to the railroad. In 1882, Kuna was a 100-person construction camp of the OSL where the Silver Trail stage road crossed the newly constructed railroad. It became a station stop where passengers and freight could unload and transfer to a stage or wagon on the Silver Trail Road from Boise City to Silver City. At least three warehouses, a depot, and a post office were built by 1883 to serve as a transportation hub for Boise City, Idaho City, Placerville, Centerville and Silver City. Kuna blossomed, but its bloom did not last long as when the Idaho Central Railroad built a connection between the OSL and Boise City its importance as a Transfer Junction declined. The new direct connection to Boise City eliminated the need for Kuna as a transfer location after 1887. Kuna would be abandoned until the next century.

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## GOVERNMENT (COUNTY & STATE)

On March 4, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln signed an Act of Congress to create Idaho Territory out of the existing Washington Territory. When Oregon became a state in 1859 out of Oregon Country, the remaining area that used to be Oregon Country was renamed Washington Territory by the U.S., although, this new territory was not just the present-day area of Idaho, but a much bigger one that covered all of Montana and most of Wyoming.<sup>29</sup> In this new Idaho Territory Lewiston was selected as the first territorial capital by Governor William H. Wallace on July 10, 1863.<sup>30</sup> This decision of Lewiston as the territorial capital was not well liked with about five-sixths of the population, especially the fast-growing population in southern Idaho due to the new gold rush in the Boise Basin. This discontent fermented in the first territorial legislative session in December of 1863 when Representative H.C. Riggs put forth a bill to move the capital to Boise City, but it was tabled and the capital stayed in Lewiston.<sup>31</sup>

While the bill to move the capital from Lewiston to Boise City was tabled, the discontent continued to grow as by the second legislative session in November 1864, when more representatives showed up from southern Idaho and were able to pass a bill this time to move the capital to Boise City. Nonetheless, those in northern Idaho were not going to let this happen and sued in Lewiston, “stating that the legislature should have met in January [1865] instead of November [1864], and what was passed in November was invalid.”<sup>32</sup> The judge in Lewiston sided with the northern Idaho petitioners and declared the legislature that had met was illegal and therefore the bill to move was invalid. The territory did not have a Supreme Court, so this decision was final. Governor Wallace had left the territory to become a delegate to Congress in the fall of 1863 and was replaced by Caleb Lyon. Governor Lyon did not last long either as he secretly fled the territory at the end of 1864. He was replaced by Clinton DeWitt Smith who ignored the decision and had Boise be the capital on December 24, 1864. The new acting territorial Governor and Secretary Clinton DeWitt Smith, with a contingent of soldiers, went to Lewiston on March 29, 1865, and broke into the Lewiston Capitol Building to take the Territorial Seal and other official territorial papers back to Boise.<sup>33</sup> Governor DeWitt Smith presided over Idaho Territory from Boise City until he died suddenly on August 19, 1865. He was replaced by H.C. Gilson who eventually stole the entire territorial treasury of \$41,062 and fled to Hong Kong and Paris before he was caught. Caleb Lyon returned to be governor in Boise City, but he was dismissed and when he left the territory in the spring of 1866, he took “all of Idaho’s Indian funds (a total of \$46, 418.40)” with him.<sup>34</sup> He was replaced by D.W. Ballard on June 14, 1866, and by then Idaho Territory had a Supreme Court and they ruled that the prior sessions of the legislature were valid and the moving of the capital to Boise City from Lewiston was valid.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Ada County, 2017, 7.

<sup>30</sup> Idaho State Historical Society, 1963, “Territorial Government in Idaho, 1863-1869”, Reference Series Number 48. Boise, Idaho: Idaho State Historical Society, 1.

<sup>31</sup> Ada County, 2017, 7; Idaho State Historical Society. “Territorial Government in Idaho, 1863-1869”, 1.

<sup>32</sup> Ada County, 2017, 7.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Idaho State Historical Society. “Territorial Government in Idaho, 1863-1869”, 2.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

While there was much discussion over the proper territorial capital, the new legislature started making new counties. When Ada County was created on December 22, 1864, it was much larger than it is today. Ada County would eventually be split off into Canyon (1891), Gem (1915), Payette (1917) and parts of it would become Washington (1879), and Elmore (1889) Counties.<sup>36</sup> While Ada County was large geographically, its population was not large with only 2,675 people living there in 1870. Nonetheless, Boise was still the most populous city in the county and was chosen the county seat. Ada County was named after Idaho Territorial legislative representative Henry C. Riggs daughter Ada. Henry, Mary, and their daughter, Ada, moved to Fort Boise from California in 1863. When Idaho Territory was formed that year Henry ran for the legislature and from the start fought to move the capital of the territory from Lewiston to Boise City. When Ada County was being mapped out for this new territory some suggested Ada County first should be named after him, but he did not want that and suggested Ada instead.<sup>37</sup>



**Photo postcard of Kuna in 1918.**

#### STATEHOOD TO WORLD WAR I (1890-1919)

Idaho became a state on July 3, 1890, and, in the era from 1890-1919 Ada County experienced rapid development due to the railroads, population growth, irrigation and the transformation of the barren lands into agriculture. With the change to statehood and the rapid growth of the region due to these changes in transportation and settlement, the U.S. Army no longer needed to stay at Fort Boise and left in 1912.

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#### INFRASTRUCTURE

By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century a myriad of technological advancements brought water, sewer, mass transit, and the harnessing of water for electric power to the people of Ada County. The warm springs

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<sup>36</sup> State of Idaho, "Canyon County" <https://idaho.gov/counties/canyon/>. Accessed on February 28, 2025; State of Idaho, "Gem County" <https://idaho.gov/counties/gem/>. Accessed on February 28, 2025; State of Idaho, "Payette County" <https://idaho.gov/counties/payette/>. Accessed on February 28, 2025; State of Idaho, "Washington County" <https://idaho.gov/counties/washington/> Accessed on February 28, 2025; State of Idaho, "Elmore County" <https://idaho.gov/counties/elmore/>. Accessed on 2/28/2025.

<sup>37</sup> Ada County, 2017, 1 & 2.

that the Native Americans had used near Fort Boise were used in this time for different use. This plentiful supply of hot water was recognized as an inexpensive source for heating houses and businesses. In 1890, “the first geothermal well was drilled near the Idaho State Penitentiary.”<sup>38</sup> This was the catalyst for the formation of the Boise Warm Springs Water District in 1892. This buried heating infrastructure created the first geothermal heating district in the nation which is still in use today providing over 86 buildings in Boise with heat.<sup>39</sup>

Besides providing heat, this hot water was tapped in 1892 for a luxurious indoor swimming pool called the Natatorium. This hot water heated area made the Warm Springs Avenue neighborhood a very desirable area for Boise residents. Even a streetcar line was built to bring patrons young and old to the Natatorium, which was in use until a windstorm damaged the Natatorium leading to it being razed in 1934.<sup>40</sup>

On May 28, 1890, Boise City chartered an electric street railway. Construction on the electric trolley commenced and by 1891 it was up and running. As the town expanded, so did the trolley lines. In 1905, electric interurban construction began with the goal of connecting Boise, Caldwell, Eagle, Star, Middleton and the agricultural areas of the Boise Valley. By 1906, the Boise & Interurban Railway was nearing Caldwell having already reached Eagle, Star and Middleton. In 1907, a competitor Boise Valley Railway started building from Boise to Nampa, which it would not reach until 1909.<sup>41</sup> By the early 1910s, the steam railroads had competition with these electric interurban railroads in the Boise Valley. Powered by electricity from Swan Falls Dam these two competing streetcar lines crisscrossed the Boise Valley and by 1912, they merged to form the Idaho Traction Company which by 1915 became the Boise Valley Traction Company.<sup>42</sup> This provided a 66-mile Interurban Loop around the Boise Valley which led to “the development of “streetcar suburbs” such as Pierce Park and Ustick.” This also, helped agriculture to flourish with a closer and alternative way for farmers ship their “local produce within the region and beyond” to new sources, along with opening up existing communities to growth and development such as Eagle, Star and Middleton.<sup>43</sup>

Electricity came to the Boise Valley with hydroelectric power from Swan Falls Dam. The Swan Falls Dam on the Snake River in southern Ada County was built from 1900-1901 to provide electricity for the mine and stamp mills in the Owyhee Mountains. Hydroelectric power was seen by the Silver City mines, namely the Black Jack and Trade Dollar, as a reliable power source to expand and develop their mining operations. Prior to this, power was provided by steam boilers heated by wood or coal that had to be hauled into Silver City, as the local timber had been all cut down. Designed by A. J. Wiley, Swan Falls Dam took advantage of a rock shelf that ran across the width of the Snake River with a 136-foot-long powerhouse that provided electricity first to Silver City. Then by 1906, the Swan Falls Powerplant started providing power to the new Boise Valley electric interurban lines via a 4,400-volt line to Nampa and Caldwell, with an extension to Pierce Park. In 1907, two additional 650-kilowatt generators were installed in the powerhouse to supplement the original three 300 kilowatt generators.<sup>44</sup> In 1910, when mining in Silver City declined an additional two more 850 kilowatt generators were installed when electrical service was extended from Pierce Park into Boise. With this installation, Swan Falls Dam had the largest generating

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<sup>38</sup> Ada County Historic Preservation Council. 2007. *2007 Preservation Plan for Cultural and Historic Resources*. Boise, Idaho: [publisher not identified], 20.

<sup>39</sup> Ada County, 2017, 7; Ada County Historic Preservation Council, 2007, 20.

<sup>40</sup> City of Boise, “Natatorium 1892” <https://www.cityofboise.org/departments/parks-and-recreation/julia-davis-park-rotary-grand-plaza/decorative-bollards/natatorium-1892/>. Accessed on June 5, 2025.

<sup>41</sup> Bill Dougall, 1982, “Boise Valley Electric Railroads”, Reference Series Number 220. Boise, Idaho: Idaho State Historical Society, 1-2; Sharon Fisher, “The History of the Ustick Townsite” <https://fromboise.com/posts/the-history-of-the-ustick-townsite>. Accessed on March 6, 2025.

<sup>42</sup> Ada County, “History of Ada County”; Mark Kavanagh, 2022, “Boise Streetcar & Interurban History”, *The Transfer*. Volume 27 Issue 3. Brooks, Oregon: Oregon Electric Railway Historical Society.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Idaho State Historical Society. 1973. “Swan Falls Dam”, Reference Series Number 68. Boise, Idaho: Idaho State Historical Society, 1-2.

capacity in all of Idaho, as it was now providing 8,000 kilowatts to a multitude of cities, industry, and the interurban railways in the Treasure Valley.<sup>45</sup>

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## RECLAMATION'S BOISE PROJECT

The USRS dramatically transformed the landscape of Ada County as a result of the large, engineered projects built, starting in 1905 with the Boise-Payette Project. The Boise-Payette Project, which in 1911 became just the Boise Project, would develop over 300,000 acres.<sup>46</sup> This barren and dry land now became irrigated which in turn encouraged settlement in areas for agriculture which were no longer in the Boise River corridor and had been inaccessible to river water. Townsites such as Kuna blossomed with agriculture and new settlers when water was directly brought to the area through lateral canals off of the New York Canal and USRS's Boise-Payette Project in 1909.<sup>47</sup> The completion of the irrigation system enabled the settlement of the western portions of Ada County and the high ground benches above the lower Boise River Valley which had been inaccessible to water. By 1909 the USRS realized there was a need for more consistent water in the Boise Valley for agriculture as the run-of-the river flow from the Boise River was not enough. Consequently, a storage dam was devised, designed, and constructed to hold back more than 272,000-acre feet of water for irrigation. Arrowrock Dam was constructed from 1911 to 1915 completely by the USRS under a "force account," because the USRS realized that no private contractor would undertake building the world's tallest concrete dam in such a remote location, so the government was forced to construct it.<sup>48</sup>

The USRS not only constructed Arrowrock Dam by force account, but it also operated the first government-owned standard gauge common carrier railroad, the 17-mile-long Boise & Arrowrock, and a government town complete with its own water and sewer system. By 1913 about 1,400 people slept, worked and played, all situated below the rising dam from the Boise River.<sup>49</sup> When completed, this dam was the highest gravity arch dam in the world at 350.5 feet, and would turn out to be the first ever designed by the USRS to have Ensign valves for its outlets to release water, and was only one of two dams built by the USRS of sand cement for concrete.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Historic American Engineering Record, "Arrowrock Dam", 17-18.

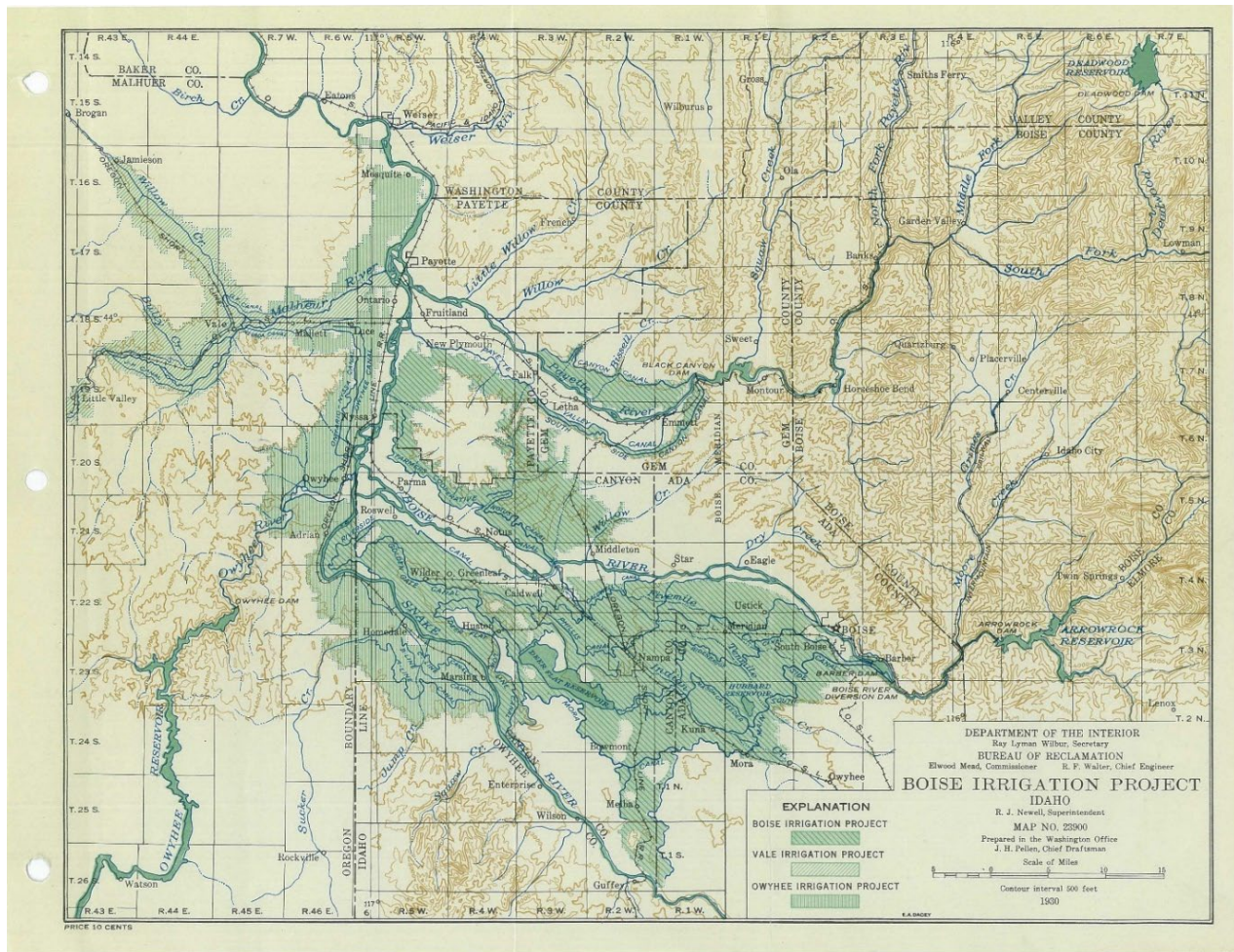
<sup>47</sup> City of Kuna, "History of Kuna".

<sup>48</sup> Historic American Engineering Record, "Arrowrock Dam", 1, 21 & 25.

<sup>49</sup> Historic American Engineering Record, "Arrowrock Dam", 26 & 28.

<sup>50</sup> Historic American Engineering Record, "Arrowrock Dam", 1.





**U.S. Bureau of Reclamation map of the Boise Project.**

## GROWTH OF AGRICULTURE

While agriculture had been established prior to this period along the Boise River, it was on a small scale until the building of the OSL. Now with the railroad and easier interstate access agriculture and fruit orchards surpassed stock raising and early irrigation projects. Although it would take the USRS's Boise-Payette Project to bring water to hundreds of thousands of formerly dry desert lands to make the land productive for agriculture.<sup>51</sup> There were many ditches in the area, such as Settlers Ditch Company whose main canal was built from 1885-1891, and the Ridenbaugh canal reached this area in the 1880s. Eventually, the Ridenbaugh Canal was purchased by the Nampa and Meridian Irrigation District in 1906.

<sup>51</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Reclamation Service. 1915. *1915 Annual History Boise Project Storage Unit*. Boise, Idaho: U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Reclamation Service, 120.



**Construction of the Settler's Canal in Meridian. Courtesy of the Meridian Historical Society.**

When the land was cleared of sagebrush and other vegetation, plowed, and planted, it became apparent that certain crops were best suited to the Boise Valley. These crops included: alfalfa, clover, grains, hardy fruits, potatoes, and vegetables.<sup>52</sup> At first the usual crop procedure for new land was to seed grain from one to two years, which was followed by leveling of the land and ditching for alfalfa or clover crops. As more acres of dry land were turned into vibrant agriculture with irrigation, some were then planted with fruit orchards and pasture. This irrigated pasture brought about a constant growth of the dairy industry. More diversity followed with row crops, and potatoes were planted in large areas which were favorable to this type of crop.<sup>53</sup> The development of agriculture in the Boise Valley was directly tied to irrigation and when more acres were opened up with the USRS's Boise Project, production increased. From 1907 to 1911, those early fruit orchards had grown to maturity and the Boise Valley saw high prices for the fruit grown from its soil. This continued a fruit boom in the Boise Valley where large tracks of land would be dedicated to just fruit orchards. In Ada County firms such as the Avalon Orchard Tracts Company planted 713 acres southwest of Kuna in 1909 and in 1911 the Nampa Apple Orchard Company incorporated and grew three commercial varieties of apples on 240 acres. Southeastern Ada County also had orchards in places such as Mora, Pleasant Valley and Orchard. Although not all land planted to orchards turned a profit as the massive 50,000 prune and other fruit trees planted near Orchard by the Idaho Fruit Company in 1894 failed when by the 1920s its soils turned out not well suited for orcharding and the company did not have enough access to water.<sup>54</sup> By 1919, there was a 50 percent increase in corn and potatoes as the Boise Project which now irrigated 103,782 acres. Apples were still king in the fruit category, with 2,413 pounds of apples harvested off each acre on the Boise Project. Apples were picked, cleaned, sorted, packed, and labeled for shipment via refrigerated

<sup>52</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Reclamation Service. 1916. *History of the Boise Project Idaho from the Beginning to 1912. Volume 1*. Boise, Idaho: U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Reclamation Service., 16-17.

<sup>53</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. 1924. *Annual Project History of Boise Project – Idaho. Calendar Year 1924*. Boise, Idaho: U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, 78.

<sup>54</sup> Arrowrock Group, Inc. 2001. *Patterns of the Past: The Ada County Historic Site Inventory*. Boise, Idaho: [publisher not identified], 16.



railroad car to be sold across the U.S. and overseas.<sup>55</sup> Around Meridian the land was planted with many varieties of apples and Italian Prune orchards. One of which was Earl Fruit Company's approximately 200 acres of prunes in and around Meridian.<sup>56</sup> To process all of this fresh fruit there were a multitude of apple packing houses built and prune dryers along the Idaho Central Railroad (later the OSL), Boise & Interurban Railway and Boise Valley Railway lines where the dried fruit or ripe fruit picked off the trees was shipped out from during this era. There were four prune dryers in Meridian alone and one was the Earl-McBirney Fruit Company's evaporating plant built in Meridian in 1918.<sup>57</sup>



Earl Fruit Company's evaporating plant in 1929. U.S. Bureau of Reclamation photograph.

<sup>55</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Reclamation Service. 1919. *Annual Project History of Boise Project Idaho for 1919*. Boise, Idaho: U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Reclamation Service, 121.

<sup>56</sup> George Yost and Dick D'Easum, 1980, *Idaho, the Fruitful Land*. Boise, Idaho: Syms-York, 91.

<sup>57</sup> TAG Historical Research & Consulting, 2014, *City of Meridian Historic Preservation Plan*. Boise, Idaho: TAG Historical Research & Consulting, 4-6; Arrowrock Group, Inc., 2001, 17; Yost and D'Easum, 1980, 92.





Blue Flag Idaho Evaporated Prune box label used in Meridian. Kelsey Doncaster collection.



McBirney's Idaho Apple basket label. Kelsey Doncaster collection.

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## TOWNS (MERIDIAN, KUNA, EAGLE)

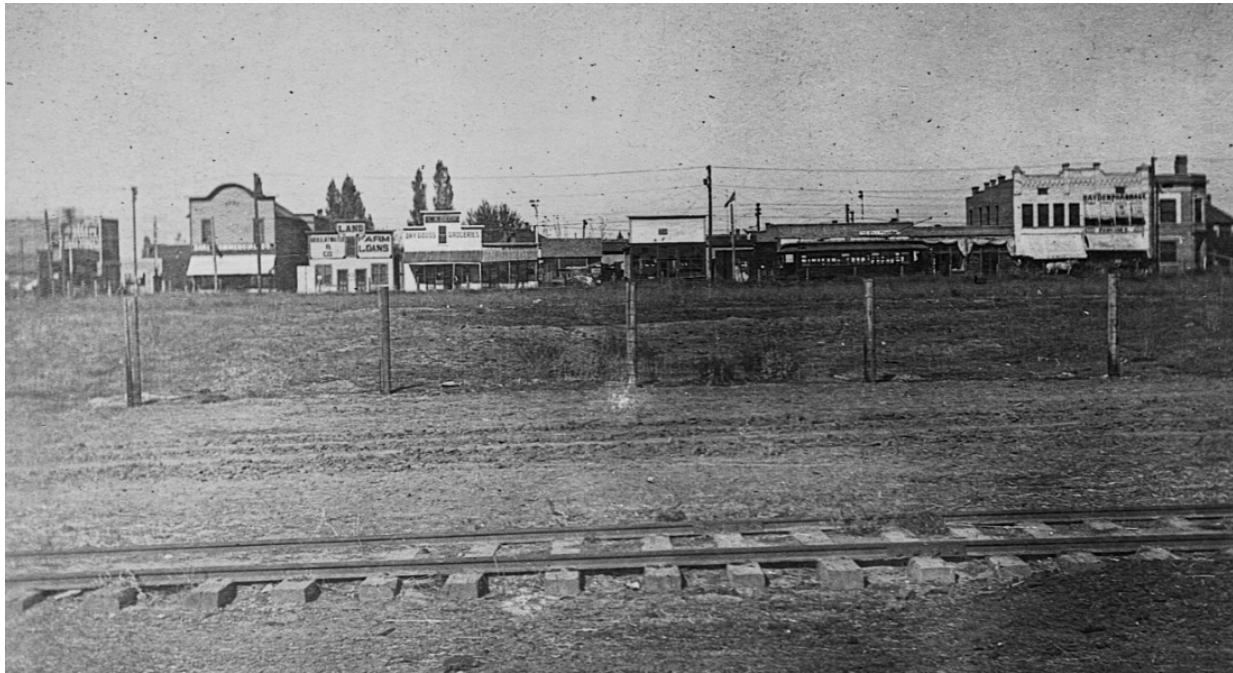
**Meridian:** Meridian's founding comes from the Idaho Central Railway which needed a mailstop halfway between Boise and Nampa. The location chosen in 1888 was given the name "Hunter" after the railroad's superintendent John Hunter. This name did not stay long as when C.G. Zenger filed a plat for the town it was chosen to be "Meridian" instead. This name came from the U.S. Geological Service's land survey Boise Meridian that passed through the town. The U.S. Postal Service changed Hunter to Meridian in 1894.<sup>58</sup> By 1903, the town had grown large enough with buildings, homes, and industry to incorporate.<sup>59</sup> Irrigation from the Settler's Ditch and the Hunter Lateral off the Ridenbaugh Canal brought water to this area which bloomed with fruit orchards when settlers came to seek their fortune in the Boise Valley with agriculture. Having both the Idaho Central (later the

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<sup>58</sup> TAG Historical Research & Consulting, 2014, *City of Meridian Historic Preservation Plan*. Boise, Idaho: TAG Historical Research & Consulting, 4.

<sup>59</sup> Ada County. "Making History in Ada County – Lila Hill" [brochure], 2.

OSL) and the Boise Valley Railway (later the Boise Valley Traction Company) in town enabled farmers to have a choice and the ability to transport their fruit easily to other markets.<sup>60</sup>



**Town Across the Railroad Track in 1920 (notice the Boise Valley Traction Company interurban car). Mayes Gray Collection Meridian Library District**

Besides its place name, Meridian was also at the crossroads of several roads, the OSL, and the Boise Valley Traction Company, which allowed other industries to flourish with products being easily transported to and from the town. Apples and Italian prunes were not the only agriculture in Meridian, as dairy was also a major industry in the town. The Meridian Creamery was started in 1897, followed by a cheese factory in 1913 and then the formation of the Ada County Dairymen's Association Creamery co-operative in 1929.<sup>61</sup> The opening of the creamery in 1929 had a big celebration including a dairy show which became the annual Meridian Dairy Days celebration.<sup>62</sup>

**Eagle:** The area where the City of Eagle would eventually form started to develop in the early 1890s when Thomas Aiken purchased property on the north bank of the Boise River across from Eagle Island. After Ada County built a bridge across the Boise River, much to the disappointment of Star which also wanted to be the crossing of the Boise River, this land was now ripe for development. Since now people could cross over the river and head north to the Payette Valley at this location, permanent buildings started to be constructed. In 1900, a school was built; in 1902 a grocery store; and then retired teamster John Carpenter constructed an Odd Fellows Hall. In 1904, things would change when Aiken and Carpenter platted a town, but it needed a name so the high schoolers at the schoolhouse ran a contest with Eagle chosen as the winning name for this new townsite. The development of Eagle continued slowly, with L.B. Harris opening up the Eagle Drug Store in 1906. This would change when the electric Boise & Interurban Railway arrived on August 7, 1907. Now with direct access to Boise via rail, and by 1915 all of the towns of the Treasure Valley via the interurban loop, Eagle blossomed. Farmers could ship their fruit, produce,

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<sup>60</sup> TAG, 2014, 6.

<sup>61</sup> TAG Historical Research & Consulting, 2014, *City of Meridian Historic Preservation Plan*. Boise, Idaho: TAG Historical Research & Consulting, 6.

<sup>62</sup> Meridian Dairy Days, "About Meridian Dairy Days" <https://dairydays.org/about-us/#our-history>. Accessed on March 13, 2025.



**1950 Dairy Days Parade - Dairy Days - Meridian Idaho Meridian Library District**

and animals to the market, people could live in Eagle and commute to Boise for work, and “day tourists” would travel the valley stopping off in Eagle on their tour. In 1910, the Eagle Bank built a fine brick building, and the two-story Eagle Hotel was constructed. Agriculture was king around Eagle and industry sprang up to assist the farmer when the Boise Valley Packing Company set up its custom meat cutting plant and the Boise Valley Cooperative Creamery of nearby Meridian set up a branch operation to manufacture cheese from the many milk cows in the area. The orchard industry in Idaho produced many prunes, and in the 1910s O.F. Short had a prune packinghouse west of downtown Eagle.<sup>63</sup>

**Kuna:** The abandoned town of Kuna was revived on November 4, 1903, when Fremont Teed filed a claim for 200 acres under the Desert Land Act of 1877. Fremont, Lucy, and their three children (Hazel, Currie and Ryle) moved to Kuna on May 15, 1905. The town and the surrounding area did not have direct access to water, so they hauled water from the Snake River and later from Indian Creek for their farm. Fremont re-opened the post office with him as postmaster. Kuna’s fortunes changed dramatically with the coming of irrigation water from the USRS Boise-Payette (later just Boise) Project. With irrigation water now readily available the barren land could be farmed and in 1909 lots in the former townsite were sold for \$100 each with 144 of the 200 being sold before the auction had taken place. That year new buildings were built in the townsite, including the Kuna Savings Bank, the Kuna Hotel and Fiss Mercantile. The growth of the community would continue to sprout with Kuna incorporated in 1915. Infrastructure was built including a 400-foot-deep well, a 40,000-gallon water tank, and utilities were added including streetlights and electricity, by 1916, Kuna had a population of 250 people.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>63</sup> City of Eagle, “The City of Eagle: Yesterday and Today” [https://everythingeagle.net/pages/History\\_of\\_Eagle](https://everythingeagle.net/pages/History_of_Eagle). Accessed on March 6, 2025; Dougall, 1982, 1-2.

<sup>64</sup> City of Kuna, “History of Kuna”.



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## STREETCARS & SUBURBS

While the steam railroads had made connections in the Boise Valley it was the electric interurbans that helped to develop “streetcar suburbs” where people could live in a smaller town such as Star, Pierce Park, or the Interurban Addition, and commute daily to work in Boise.<sup>65</sup> Pierce Park was developed by the W.E. Pierce & Co., who set a pattern followed by today’s developers including planning, financing, transportation, utilities, and amenities to attract new home buyers. Pierce’s other development east of Star was the Interurban Addition.<sup>66</sup> Some streetcar developers went even further, such as medical doctor Harlan P. Ustick, who was instrumental in getting the electric Boise Valley Railway to come right through his newly platted townsite of Ustick in 1907, on its route from Boise to Nampa. Ustick grew like a weed according to the *Idaho Statesman* newspaper after the interurban came with a school, mercantile, bank, apple orchards and houses that sat on three, five and ten acre lots as country homes. A cider vinegar processing plant was built along with the Boise Valley Cooperative Creamery’s cheese making factory.<sup>67</sup>



Eagle’s former Ballantine stop (along State Street, east of Eagle Road) for the Boise and Interurban Railway’s interurban trolley. ISHS photograph 62-53.3.

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## BARBER LUMBER COMPANY

While agriculture dominated the valley, the mountains surrounding the valley and beyond were filled with timber. The cutting and sawing of logs was a significant industry of Ada County and other parts of southern Idaho. The newly formed Barber Lumber Company purchased three homesteads in 1903, five miles east of Boise, to build a massive two-band sawmill, planing mill, box factory, dry kilns, a barn for horses, with a dam on the Boise River to create electricity for the mill and a mill pond for the logs. The complex was completed in 1905, but the hundreds of

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<sup>65</sup> Ada County, “History of Ada County”.

<sup>66</sup> Arrowrock Group Inc., 2001, 11; City of Star, “The Interurban Railway”  
<https://www.staridaho.org/community/page/interurban-railway>. Accessed on March 6, 2025.

<sup>67</sup> Fisher, “The History of the Ustick Townsite”.

employees needed to run this operation required a permanent place to live.<sup>68</sup> The Barber Lumber Company created a company town in 1906, called Barberton, right next to the sawmill complex that was complete with post office. The town eventually at its peak had 104 houses, graded streets, 300 trees, the Barber Hotel and boarding house, school, store, bath house, barber shop, golf course, and community hall. Although, the U.S. Post Office changed the name from Barberton to Barber in 1909.<sup>69</sup> Logs were first floated down the Boise River to the mill. Then, when the USRS built the 17-mile-long Boise & Arrowrock Railroad in 1911 past Barber to supply materials for the building of Arrowrock Dam, Barber Lumber Company realized the USRS had a start to tap the vast forests in the Boise Basin via a railroad.<sup>70</sup> In 1913, the Barber Lumber Company and the Payette Lumber Company merged to form the Boise-Payette Lumber Company, making them one of the largest lumber companies in the Pacific Northwest.<sup>71</sup> When the USRS no longer needed the Boise & Arrowrock Railway with the completion of the dam they sold the railroad to Boise-Payette Lumber Company's Intermountain Railway in 1916.<sup>72</sup> By this time the Intermountain Railway had already added to the end of Boise & Arrowrock's trackage with a branch line to tap timber in the Boise River, Mores Creek and Grimes Creek drainage to Centerville in 1915.<sup>73</sup> An engine house and machine shop were built at Barber, and the Intermountain Railway logging line would eventually stretch a total of 45 miles from Barber to near Idaho City to transport the cut logs to the mill. This massive operation lasted until 1935 when the mill was closed, and the employees were transferred to Emmett where the Boise-Payette Lumber Company had another mill and logging operation.<sup>74</sup> Some of the houses from Barber were moved off the property to other parts of Boise such as the Central Rim area.<sup>75</sup>

## ROARING 1920S THROUGH THE GREAT DEPRESSION (1920-1940)

### AGRICULTURE

In 1920, apple production was even greater than the year prior, with 3,558.03 pounds of apples per acre. Alfalfa hay was still the predominant crop, but potato production increased by 58 percent to 4,386 acres. With changing prices for grains, grasses and seed crops such as clover seed, corn, wheat, oats, and barley to name a few, would come in and out of favor for the farmer to plant in the Boise Valley.<sup>76</sup> In 1921, lettuce was planted as a commercial crop which eventually becoming "a major "garden" crop over the years".<sup>77</sup> By 1926, far more diversification was noticeable in what farmers grew in the Boise Valley, with over 6,011 railroad carloads shipped out the valley of fruits, vegetables, dairy products, poultry and livestock of which there were 2,275 carloads alone.<sup>78</sup> Livestock grown consisted of cattle, hogs, sheep, chickens, turkeys, and, in 1927, a rabbit producers association was formed with 100 members who would raise rabbits for meat and fur.<sup>79</sup> As the population grew in the Boise Valley, the towns and industries became a strong local market for consuming large quantities of local products grown in the valley, but also the steady increase in marketability of agriculture provided a full-time livelihood to an ever-

<sup>68</sup> Jim Witherell, 1989, *The Log Trains of Southern Idaho*. Denver, Colorado: Sundance Books, 18 & 65.

<sup>69</sup> TAG, 2014, 8, 14, 16 & 18; Historic American Engineering Record, "Arrowrock Dam", 26.

<sup>70</sup> Historic American Engineering Record, "Arrowrock Dam", 26 & 50.

<sup>71</sup> Witherell, "Log Trains", 57-58.

<sup>72</sup> Historic American Engineering Record, "Arrowrock Dam", 26 & 50.

<sup>73</sup> Idaho State Historical Society, "Lumber in the Boise Region", Reference Series Number 173. Boise, Idaho: Idaho State Historical Society, 3.

<sup>74</sup> Witherell, "Log Trains", 18, 65, 139 & 154.

<sup>75</sup> Central Rim Neighborhood, "Architecture & Landscape" [https://centralrim.idahohistory.org/?page\\_id=14](https://centralrim.idahohistory.org/?page_id=14) Accessed April 29, 2025.

<sup>76</sup> USRS, Boise Project History, 1920, 159-160.

<sup>77</sup> Judith Austin, 1974, "Agricultural History of Boise Valley", Reference Series Number 176. Boise, Idaho: Idaho State Historical Society, 2.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, 1928, *Annual Project History of Boise Project – Idaho. Calendar Year 1928*. Boise, Idaho: U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, 98 & 102.

increasing number of families. By 1928, in USRS's Boise Project there was a myriad of industries producing all kinds of goods from agricultural products such as a milk condensery, five creameries, two cheese factories, two pickle factories, five flour and feed mills, three fruit dryers, and two egg and poultry plants, to name a few. That year, three of the largest buyers of dairy products sold their entire output, after what was sold locally first, to the City of Los Angeles..<sup>80</sup>

The year 1928 also saw the introduction of mint, peas, celery, bran, barley, rye, raspberries and dewberries to the Boise Valley for commercial production. The agricultural production of the valley continued to increase with 7,883 carloads of fruit, produce and livestock shipped out of the Boise Project. There were over 1,154 carloads of apples shipped out from some of the 23 shipping points on the Boise Valley Traction Company and OSL, along with 737 carloads of prunes, and 9 carloads of peaches. While apples were still king of fruits in the number of carloads, potatoes would not be outdone with 894 carloads and there were 186 carloads of butter shipped out of the valley..<sup>81</sup> Alfalfa was still the principal crop grown on the Boise Project through the 1920s-1930s with most of it consumed locally..<sup>82</sup>



Arrow Rock prune box label from Idaho Evaporating Co. Inc. in Meridian. Kelsey Doncaster collection.

The Great Depression brought falling prices for all kinds of fruit, produce, and cattle. Agriculture was hard hit, but stable market items such as alfalfa and potatoes actually increased during this period. Dairying was still the most stable out-of-valley market, and it stayed steady during these tough times. In 1934, farmers in the Boise Valley received better prices on all of the products they produced and carload shipments out of the valley were up 75 percent, except for fruit which decreased. Apple acreage continued to decrease as competition from other states like Washington (which by 1934 was number one in the nation for commercial apple production) would overtake the out-of-valley market for apples in the Boise Valley..<sup>83</sup> Dairying continued to be a profitable venture through the 1930s-1940s as the market for all of those Boise Valley dairy products continued to grow in Southern California..<sup>84</sup> Sugar beets were first introduced into the Boise Valley on a very small scale, with only two acres of sugar beets in 1913. But by the 1930s, when Amalgamated Sugar built a sugar factory in Nyssa, Oregon, more and more acres

<sup>80</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, 1928, 95 & 97.

<sup>81</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, 1928, 98.

<sup>82</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, 1930, *Annual Project History of Boise Project – Idaho. Calendar Year 1930*, Boise, Idaho: U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, 136; U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, 1935, *Annual Project History of Boise Project – Idaho. Calendar Year 1935*, Boise, Idaho: U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, 77.

<sup>83</sup> Clyde D. Merchant, 1935, *Some believe-it-or-nots of the apple industry*, Wenatchee, Washington: First National Bank of Wenatchee, 2.

<sup>84</sup> Austin, 1974, 3.



were planted for this crop in the lower parts of the Boise Project.<sup>85</sup> By this time sugar beets were subsidized by the U.S. Government and the sugar companies which made it a very profitable crop. By 1939 sugar beets had been planted in the project to maximum capacity of the Nyssa plant.<sup>86</sup> In 1939 the Black Canyon Canal was completed from Black Canyon Diversion Dam to barren lands of the Payette Division of the Boise Project. From then on, the Boise Project would have two functioning divisions: the Arrowrock Division, which was in both Ada and Canyon Counties in Idaho and Malheur County in Oregon; and the Payette Division, which was in Gem and Canyon Counties.<sup>87</sup>

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## TRANSPORTATION

The 1920s saw a rise and fall in transportation in Ada County for its residents. Automobile roads were improving, and the OSL built a direct passenger rail line from Orchard to Boise in 1925 where passengers would disembark at a Mission Style depot complete with clock tower that looked down upon Capitol Boulevard. The decline in this period was when the Boise Valley Traction Company's interurban was abandoned in 1928 due the new competition from automobiles and trucks now that roads had greatly improved in the Boise Valley.<sup>88</sup>



**Transcontinental limited from the west arriving at station Celebration of coming of UP main line to Boise on April 16, 1925. University of Idaho photograph 5-008-05k.**

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<sup>85</sup> Amalgamated Sugar, "Our History" <https://www.amalgamatedsugar.com/our-story/our-history/>. Accessed on April 21, 2025.

<sup>86</sup> Austin, 1974, 1 & 3-4.

<sup>87</sup> William Joe Simonds, 2009, *The Boise Project* Denver, Colorado: Bureau of Reclamation History Program, 31.

<sup>88</sup> Ada County, 2017, 15; Dougall, 1982, 2.



While Henry Ford and his Model T made cars more affordable for Americans, in 1919 many of the roads in Ada County were still dirt or gravel with brick being laid in the larger cities such as Boise. Longer sections of road between towns were the old dirt wagon trail routes which were not as reliable as the railroads or electric interurban. This would change following the Federal Highway Act of 1921 which allocated Federal money for the development of two-lane interstate highways. By 1926, the first interstate highway, U.S. Highway 30, had made its way through Ada County. This new road followed some of the route of the Oregon Trail, so it was also known as the Old Oregon Trail Highway. Work began on a new grand boulevard in Boise in 1925 to connect the new OSL depot and the Idaho State Capitol Building and by 1931 it was completed. This new Capitol Boulevard reflected the American City Beautiful Movement with its wide right-of-way, landscaped median, light poles, and the Oregon Trail Memorial Bridge. This three span concrete spandrel arch bridge over the Boise River has decorative lighted pylons at each end with inlaid mosaics and brass memorial plaques designed by artist Vern Leroy Bouen..<sup>89</sup>

The availability of good roads in the 1920s-1930s fostered more development and the growth of suburbia along their routes. One of those new developments that sprang up along the highways were motels and motor courts. These establishments would provide an inexpensive place for the traveling tourist to park their car and stay overnight. No longer needing to stay in a hotel which catered to the business traveler or the social elite in dense downtown

locations, these establishments would have adequate parking and were located outside the congested areas of town. First came the tourist camps (campground), followed by cabin camps and more permanent year-round accommodations in cottage courts. The motor court was the next evolution of the cottage court with its "integrated or unitary construction rather than separate cabins or cottages"..<sup>90</sup> The 21-unit U-shaped Boulevard Motel/Capitol Auto Courts was built in 1938 along U.S. 30 at 1121 S. Capitol Boulevard in Boise as a motor court for the weary automobile traveler.



**Circa 1950s Boulevard Motel postcard.**

<sup>89</sup> National Register Nomination for Oregon Trail Memorial Bridge, 1990, 2; National Register Nomination for Capitol Auto Courts, Section 8 Page 2.

<sup>90</sup> Jennifer Eng, 1998, "Capitol Auto Courts National Register of Historic Places Registration Form." On file at Idaho State Historic Preservation Office, Boise, Idaho, Section 8 Page 3.



The 1920s also brought the growth of the airplane and commercial air service to Ada County. In 1926 Boise's first municipal airport was built south of the Boise River. This small dirt airfield was home to Varney Airlines that was established by Walter Varney in 1926. Varney Airlines contracted with the U.S. Postal Service to transport the mail between Pasco, Washington, Boise, Idaho and Elko, Nevada. Their first commercial airmail flight was on April 26, 1926, and not only did they carry the sacks of mail between these cities, but chief pilot Leon Cuttleback also picked up a special gift when he landed in Boise. He picked up two sacks of mail along with two prize Idaho potatoes for President Calvin Coolidge, to go with the bottles of grape juice and the box of fresh asparagus that Pasco had mailed on this flight too.<sup>91</sup> Varney Airlines in 1930 was bought out by United Aircraft and Transport Corporation which eventually became United Airlines in 1934.<sup>92</sup> With the continual growth of air transport and travel the original municipal airport was replaced by a larger airstrip called Whitney Field located south of the New York Canal after 1939.<sup>93</sup>



**Boise Municipal Airport in 1930. U.S. Bureau of Reclamation photograph.**

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## THE GREAT DEPRESSION & FDR'S NEW DEAL

By the late 1920s, things were changing in the Boise Valley which were magnified when the Great Depression started with the stock market crash of 1929. In 1928 when the Boise Valley Traction Company abandoned its electric interurban operations, the small communities that had been connected on the Boise Valley Loop in Ada County suffered. Star was one of the worst affected by this loss of the interurban. So much so that when the State of Idaho was paving the highway east and west of Star's city limits in 1929 the city voted to dis-incorporate instead of having to pay for the paving within the city limits.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Marvin E. Berryman, "A History of United Airlines" [http://uahf.org/united\\_history\\_01.asp](http://uahf.org/united_history_01.asp). Accessed on April 23, 2025.

<sup>92</sup> American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, "Today in Transportation History – 1926: A Small Precursor to a Big Airline Makes Its First Flight" <https://transportationhistory.org/2018/04/06/today-in-transportation-history-1926-a-small-precursor-to-a-big-airline-makes-its-first-flight/>. Accessed on April 23, 2025.

<sup>93</sup> Berryman, "A History of United Airlines"; Barbara Perry Bauer, personal communication, April 25, 2025.

<sup>94</sup> City of Star, "History of Star".

## WORLD WAR II AND POPULUXE ERA (1941-1969)

The war effort in World War II (WWII) was not just in the military but consumed everyday life, from scrap drives to rationing. The agricultural industry in the Boise Valley was ramped up for the war effort to provide the needed foodstuffs for troops. The Great Depression was over, but in the words of Boise resident Cloris Knox “[e]verything changed...There were times when you’d be having fun and forget about it [the war], but it was never far from your mind. And there were so many people...who sons or husbands were gone and overseas...There were nine boys from our class that never came back”. Gowen Field brought an influx of these new military personnel, including black service members, from across the U.S. to train to fly bombers while women, braceros and other nationalities came to work in the fields to harvest the crops as the war raged on.<sup>95</sup>

The post WWII boom brought more changes to Ada County in the growth of the towns in the county and agriculture which during the 1950s was still the chief source of income. For example, Meridian during this time “claimed the most milk cows per square mile of settled area in Idaho.”<sup>96</sup>

The population explosion in Ada County was different than before WWII. This was the era of suburban growth and sprawl rather than the traditional development within or around existing cities that had gone on for centuries. No longer were housing developments built with small lots with a garage on the alleyway. New suburban neighborhoods had houses with attached garages or carports, no alley and big yards. Streets were designed wide with cul-de-sacs for clusters of houses that radiated like petals of a flower. Likewise commercial development switched from multi-story buildings with housing above to single story buildings in strip malls in locations such as Vista Village on Vista Avenue in Boise.<sup>97</sup>

Populuxe is used to describe the time of the post-WWII era from the 1950’s-1960’s when a futuristic design style was prominent in American culture influencing cars to countertops, clothing, homes, businesses, and everything else in-between. This style evoked a luxury for the middle class where the future was bright. Within it was the Googie style of modern architecture that started in Southern California in 1949, with the Googie coffee shop in West Hollywood. It was a “golden age” of futurist design built on exaggeration, dramatic angles, with many different types of materials from the wide-eyed technical optimism of the Space Age. It was used not only in homes, but especially in everyday businesses like coffee shops, car washes, restaurants, banks, airports and even more dramatic structures like the Space Needle in Seattle.<sup>98</sup> In Boise the National Register listed Forty-Four & Sixty-Six Service Station (National Register Ref# 100004673) is a good example of Googie style in the gas station design.<sup>99</sup>

With the move to the suburbs large cities like Boise experienced the vacating of cities for these newer commercial buildings or housing which now had plenty of parking for the burgeoning car culture instead of the compact downtown core with its limited on the street parking. Urban Renewal was seen as the answer by the Federal Government to revitalize these cities. The Boise Renewal Agency was created and crafted plans to get a Federal Urban Renewal Grant to revitalize downtown Boise several times between 1965 and 1974. The plan was to clear twelve downtown blocks of historic buildings so developers could build anew with mega-shopping malls and hotels. This placed many historic buildings downtown under great threats like the Idanha Hotel into an uncertain

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<sup>95</sup> Ancestry.com. “Idaho During World War II” <https://www.ancestry.com/historical-insights/war-military/wwii/idaho-during-wwii>. Accessed on April 30, 2025.

<sup>96</sup> Ada County, 2017, 17.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Kelsey Doncaster, 2024, “Fetcher-House Waterville Register of Historic Places Nomination Form” Choteau, Montana: Doncaster Consulting, LLC.

<sup>99</sup> Kerry Davis and Sarah Martin, 2019, “Forty-Four & Sixty-Six Service Station National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.” (National Register Reference #100004673) On file at Idaho State Historic Preservation Office, Boise, Idaho.

future.<sup>100</sup> Other areas of Boise were under threat of removal such as buildings in the River Street neighborhood which by the 1960s were deemed “blighted” and “deteriorated beyond practical repair” were razed.<sup>101</sup> Survivor buildings or structures could also still be removed when streets were widened like River Street. River Street, which had been a quiet neighborhood between the OSL railroad tracks and the Boise River, was transformed over time into a busy noisy urban corridor.<sup>102</sup>

The growth of suburbia was boosted by the Federal Highway Act, also known as the National Interstate and Defense Highway Act, passed in 1956 made it easier to live outside the cities and just commute in with your car. The Interstate Highway System was desired by President Dwight Eisenhower from his experience with good highways when he participated in the U.S. Army’s first transcontinental motor convoy in 1919 from Washington D.C. to San Francisco, California and much later when as a general in WWII he saw firsthand the advantages of the Autobahn highway network in Germany for the movement of troops and weaponry. When the law passed there was an authorization of \$25 billion for construction of 41,000 miles with a timeline of 12 years (1957-1969) which would dramatically change how cities, towns and states were strung together through a concrete highway. It fundamentally altered the pattern of community development that would now be based on the automobile while cutting through existing neighborhoods, many of which were lower income neighborhoods in cities, and bypassing many small towns. This new Interstate Highway System did not come to Ada County until the 1960s.<sup>103</sup>

Urban renewal and the development of the interstate freeway system dramatically changed existing cities, and towns starting in the 1960s and Ada County was not alone. In Ada County the freeway became a controversial issue in 1960 when three routes were being decided and how they would impact Boise. One was the River Route, which the freeway would parallel the Boise River. This would have dramatically impacted downtown Boise with removal of residential neighborhoods in its path, creating much traffic noise in parks and neighborhoods along with blocking the view of downtown between the Capitol Building and the Boise Depot. The second was the Railroad Route, which would follow the existing Union Pacific Railroad passenger tracks through Boise. As this followed the railroad’s route for passenger trains, it would have marred the Mediterranean style Union Pacific Passenger Depot which was in its path. The final one was the Bypass Route which would go south of Boise with a spur leading to downtown Boise.<sup>104</sup> Thankfully, the Bypass Route was chosen with the least amount of impact to Boise, although it was not without consequences as the connector impacted Garden City, the Central Rim neighborhood of Boise, and the OSL freight route into downtown.<sup>105</sup> This new freeway was called I-80N with its downtown connector on the west side designated I-180N which was completed in 1968. The designation of the freeway and the Boise Connector remained the same until 1980 when it was changed to I-84 and the connector to I-184.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Society of Architectural Historians, “Idanha Apartments” <https://sah-archipedia.org/buildings/ID-01-001-0083>. Accessed on March 13, 2025.

<sup>101</sup> City of Boise, “The River Street Neighborhood” <https://www.ermahaymanhouse.org/about-erma-hayman/the-river-street-neighborhood/>. Accessed on March 3, 2025.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, “National Interstate and Defense Highways Act (1956)” <https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/national-interstate-and-defense-highways-act>. Accessed April 29, 2025.

<sup>104</sup> Boise State University, “The Roads Not Taken: Boise and the Interstate Highway, 1960” <https://web.archive.org/web/20110523141255/http://library.boisestate.edu/Special/Interstate.shtm>. Accessed on 4/29/2025.

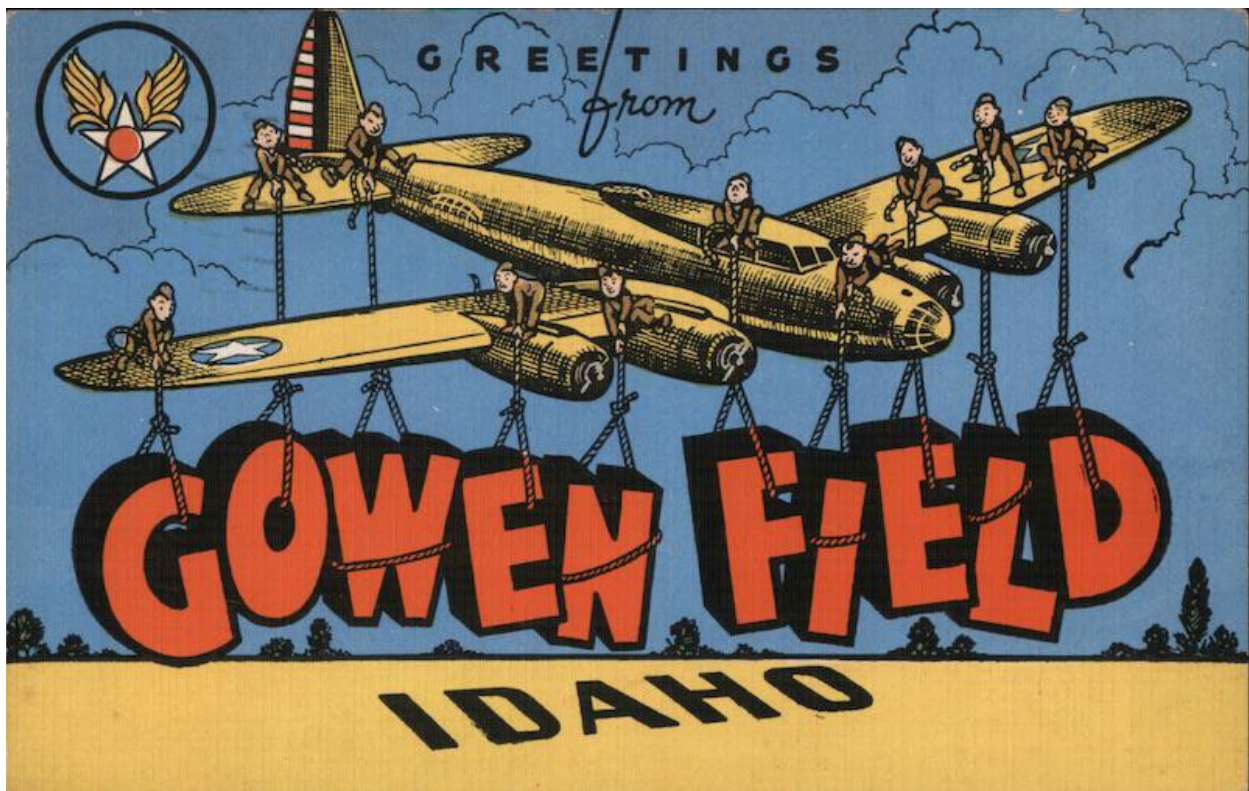
<sup>105</sup> Central Rim Neighborhood, “Community” [https://centralrim.idahohistory.org/?page\\_id=12](https://centralrim.idahohistory.org/?page_id=12). Accessed April 29, 2025.

<sup>106</sup> Ada County, 2017, 18.

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## GOWEN FIELD

As the war in Europe raged on in the late 1930s/early, 1940 the U.S. Government started to increase its military and its bases. These bases would be used for training and deployment for the growing military. In December 1940, the U.S. Army authorized the construction of Boise Air Base. This base would consist of approximately 120 buildings and warehousing of 2,500 personnel.<sup>107</sup> On January 21, 1941, construction of the base began with the clearing of the sagebrush next to Whitney Field. On July 29, 1941, Boise Air Base was renamed Gowen Field after Paul Gowen who was a West Point graduate from Caldwell that had been killed in a plane crash in 1938. When the U.S. entered WWII Gowen Field was home to six B-18 Bolo bombers, and then later B-26 Marauders, which were soon replaced by B-17 and B-24 bombers.<sup>108</sup> Military personnel would be trained at Gowen Field on how to operate and use these bombers in WWII. The influx of these new military personnel would create a housing shortage in Boise. Some trainers at Gowen Field moved with their families to Boise. Although, African American service members were limited in where they could stay off-base due to discrimination. African American service members found sanctuary in River Street in Boise, which was a multi-racial neighborhood as early as 1900 due to the wider issue of discrimination throughout the area. During and after the war, African American service members continued to concentrate in the River Street neighborhood due to the availability of housing and non-discrimination in this neighborhood.<sup>109</sup>



1940s postcard for Gowen Field.

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<sup>107</sup> State of Idaho, "Our History" <https://www.imd.idaho.gov/idaho-national-guard/our-history/>. Accessed on March 3, 2025.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.; Barbara Perry Bauer, personal communication, April 25, 2025.

<sup>109</sup> City of Boise, "The River Street Neighborhood".



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## AGRICULTURE – SIMPLOT

The 1940s were a time of change with WWII raging on and the impact of war shortages. By 1942, J.R. Simplot had opened up a new dehydration plant in Caldwell that was using 10,000 acres of potatoes and onions. That year Amalgamated Sugar built a new plant in Nampa that precipitated a doubling of acres of sugar beets on the project.<sup>110</sup> In 1943, the potato acreage had doubled because the guaranteed price for the spuds.<sup>111</sup> There were also 183 acres of hops planted in 1944. During the 1940s there were more small-scale agricultural processing plants built in the Boise Valley and even a new industry that would help the vegetable farmer when J.R. Simplot's dehydrating plant expanded into the new food-processing field of frozen vegetables in 1945. This brought about an increase in vegetable crops that no longer had to be sold perishable but could be kept frozen and eaten year-around.<sup>112</sup>

By the early 1940s "J.R. Simplot Company had become the largest shipper of fresh potatoes in the county and was selling millions of pounds of dehydrated onions and potatoes to the military."<sup>113</sup> By this time J.R. Simplot had been growing potatoes and onions in Southern Idaho for nearly 30 years, having started in agriculture at the age of 14.<sup>114</sup> By the end of WWII, Simplot had 14 dehydrated-potato plants in Idaho, but the demand for the potato flakes dried up with the end of the war.<sup>115</sup> Simplot would constantly "find a better way to sort, grow, store, ship, dehydrate, and process potatoes" and as his company grew, he expanded beyond agriculture to livestock, natural resource extraction in lumber and mining, food processing, and fertilizer manufacturing.<sup>116</sup> In WWII J.R. Simplot also worked to solve the housing shortage his employees faced with the development of real estate.<sup>117</sup>

By 1946, there were 14,505 carloads of agricultural products and livestock shipped from the Boise Project, a new record with sugar beets having the largest number of railroad shipments out of the Boise Project with 5,192. The dairying industry remained strong, seed crops increased, and alfalfa still remained the largest crop grown on the project by acres.<sup>118</sup>

In 1947, J.R. Simplot Company moved its headquarters to downtown Boise, which consisted of two staff. Simplot was always investing a "share" in Ada County and in 1952 KDSH Radio aired The Simplot Company Radio Hour which told the tales of Idaho's history through a radio drama. These tales were later made into tapes available for elementary school classrooms.<sup>119</sup> During the Post-WWII period Simplot expanded his food production business into freezing, canning, and development of the frozen french fry.<sup>120</sup> More consistent water was provided to the Boise Project lands when Anderson Ranch Dam was completed in 1951, which had a storage capacity of 464,178

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<sup>110</sup> Amalgamated Sugar, "Our History".

<sup>111</sup> Austin, 1974, 4-5.

<sup>112</sup> Austin, 1974, 5.

<sup>113</sup> J.R. Simplot Company, "About our Founder" <https://www.simplot.com/company/our-founder>. Accessed on January 24, 2025.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> Zach Kyle, "New McDonald's french-fry video stars Idaho potato farmer, a Simplot supplier," Idaho Statesman December 5, 2016 <https://www.idahostatesman.com/news/business/article117450058.html>. Accessed on March 3, 2025.

<sup>116</sup> Ada County, 2006, "Making History in Ada County – J.R. Simplot" [brochure], 1.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, 1946, *Boise Project History 1946*, Boise, Idaho: U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, 171-173.

<sup>119</sup> Ada County, 2006, 1.

<sup>120</sup> John Miller. "Idaho billionaire Simplot dies at 99", *The Spokesman-Review* May 26, 2008 <https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2008/may/26/idaho-billionaire-simplot-dies-at-99/>. Accessed on March 3, 2025.

acre feet of water on the Boise River.<sup>121</sup> In the 1950s, the irrigated lands in the Arrowrock Division continued to produce more and more agricultural products but the lands in Ada County were impacted with the growth of suburbia from towns such as Boise where agricultural land adjacent to the city was annexed in 1960 as the city limits began to grow farther and farther out from the center of town.<sup>122</sup> Alfalfa still retained the title of the largest number of acres in the project with 39,443 acres that totaled \$2,760, 858 in value in 1955. Although sugar beets were only 9,083 acres compared to alfalfa, sugar beets were far more profitable with those acres totaling \$1,947,819 in value. Apples had been steadily declining as there were 2,553 acres of apples in 1930, but by 1955 it had shrunk to 1,140 acres on the project. By 1955, apple production was nearly the same as peaches (1,130) and prunes (1028). Other acres of fruits that were grown on the project that year were pears (251), cherries (170), plums (139), grapes (53), apricots (41), and berries (18). This pattern continued with a continual increase in different types of crops including seed crops of garlic, carrot, radish, parsnip, turnip and lima beans in 1960 alone.<sup>123</sup>

In 1967, J.R. Simplot on a handshake agreement with the Ray Kroc, the CEO of McDonalds, “invested \$3.5 million to put the experimental frozen-fry process into a production line with the capacity to turn out 25,000 pounds of frozen fries in an hour.”<sup>124</sup> Simplot said these frozen fries would deliver a consistency and overcome a shortage of fresh Russet Burbank potatoes that McDonalds was experiencing. This gamble paid off as Simplot became McDonalds largest domestic supplier increasing his sales to McDonalds from 20 to 50 percent. This frozen-fry way caught on elsewhere and, by 1995, “nearly a quarter of the nation’s potato crop went to frozen fries, up from 2 percent in the 1950s.”<sup>125</sup>

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## TOWNS (GARDEN CITY)

**Garden City:** Garden City took its name from the Chinese gardens that had been in the area for many decades supplying vegetables, strawberries, and eventually hogs to the growing city of Boise. It was formed on May 22, 1949, but not because of agriculture, but instead as a result of Boise banning slot machines. As Garden City was becoming a suburb of Boise, a group of local businessmen established Garden City to build a small “amusement center” that would be a haven for slot machines and gambling.<sup>126</sup> This move for Garden City to become Ada County’s gambling hub was short-lived, as in 1954 an Idaho state law was passed that prohibited all forms of gambling.<sup>127</sup> In 1949, Garden City was incorporated as a village and was approximately 100 acres in size with 400 people and it continued to grow in size and population. Then in 1967 Garden City was officially incorporated as a city and by 2020 its population was now at 12,316.<sup>128</sup>

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## TECHNOLOGICAL, ENVIRONMENTAL, & SUBURBAN DEVELOPMENT (1970-1999)

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### BOISE GREENBELT

The Boise River lured Native Americans and then later the Euro-Americans who came to the Boise River Valley with its fresh clean water and the multitude of willow trees that lined its banks, although after the founding of Boise,

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<sup>121</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, 1955, *Boise Project History 1955*, Boise, Idaho: U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, 10.

<sup>122</sup> Arrowrock Group, Inc., 2001, 22.

<sup>123</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, 1960, *Boise Project History 1960*, Boise, Idaho: U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, 192.

<sup>124</sup> Kyle, “New McDonald’s french-fry.”

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> Garden City, “History of Garden City”.

<sup>127</sup> Ada County, 2017, 21.

<sup>128</sup> Garden City, “History of Garden City”; U.S. Census Bureau, “Quick Facts Garden City Idaho” <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/gardencitycityidaho>. Accessed March 3, 2025.

the river slowly became polluted from runoff from farm fields, industry, and dumping of human waste from cities along its route. In 1964, local leaders began to meet to discuss the degradation of the Boise River, and an aerial survey was done in 1968. Discussions ensued and by 1969 “a committee was formed to guide the development of the Boise River Greenbelt” and property started to be purchased in 1970 for parks along the Green Belt to allow public access to the Boise River.<sup>129</sup> The Boise River Greenbelt is approximately 25 miles and extends from Lucky Peak Dam to Eagle on both the north and south sides of the Boise River.<sup>130</sup>

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## TECHNOLOGICAL INDUSTRY

In the 1970s, Ada County began to be the home of a new type of industry in the computer era that focused on technology not resource extraction. In 1973, Palo Alto, California based Hewlett Packard opened up a plant on Chinden Boulevard that would eventually employ more than 4,000 employees in the printer division.<sup>131</sup> This new industry spun-off other technological industries. In 1978, four people started a semiconductor design company called Micron on the bottom floor of a dental office. In 1980, Micron broke ground for their first fabrication plant and continued to grow in Boise and beyond.<sup>132</sup>

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## SUBURBAN DEVELOPMENT

With the growth of technological industry by the late 1980s, the Boise Valley’s population began to explode with the Boise metropolitan area becoming “one of the fastest growing regions in the United States.”<sup>133</sup> People and businesses were coming to Ada County due to the “area’s economic opportunities, climate, and access to outdoor recreational activities.”<sup>134</sup> This population boom was not confined to just Boise as “the City of Meridian had a population of 9,596 people in 1990” and by 2017, it had “an estimated population of over 90,000 people.”<sup>135</sup> Acres and acres of farmland has been transformed into subdivisions with challenges arising from the lack of transportation, public services, and infrastructure from schools to parks for the massive influx of new residents.<sup>136</sup> With this growth, after nearly 70 years of being unincorporated Star once again became a city in 1997, which was the first new city to be incorporated since 1971 in Ada County.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> Ada County, 2017, 18; City of Boise, “Boise River Greenbelt” <https://www.cityofboise.org/departments/parks-and-recreation/parks/boise-greenbelt/>. Accessed on March 3, 2025.

<sup>130</sup> City of Boise, “Boise River Greenbelt”.

<sup>131</sup> Bill Roberts, “How Hewlett Packard came to build along Chinden Boulevard – a remembrance,” *Idaho Statesman* March 17, 2017. Accessed from <https://www.idahostatesman.com/news/local/article139236633.html>. Accessed on March 3, 2025.

<sup>132</sup> Micron Technology, Inc. “A history of Micron: Our timeline” <https://www.micron.com/about/company/company-timeline#accordion-9af3ec12dd-item-b53af8a365> Accessed on March 3, 2025.

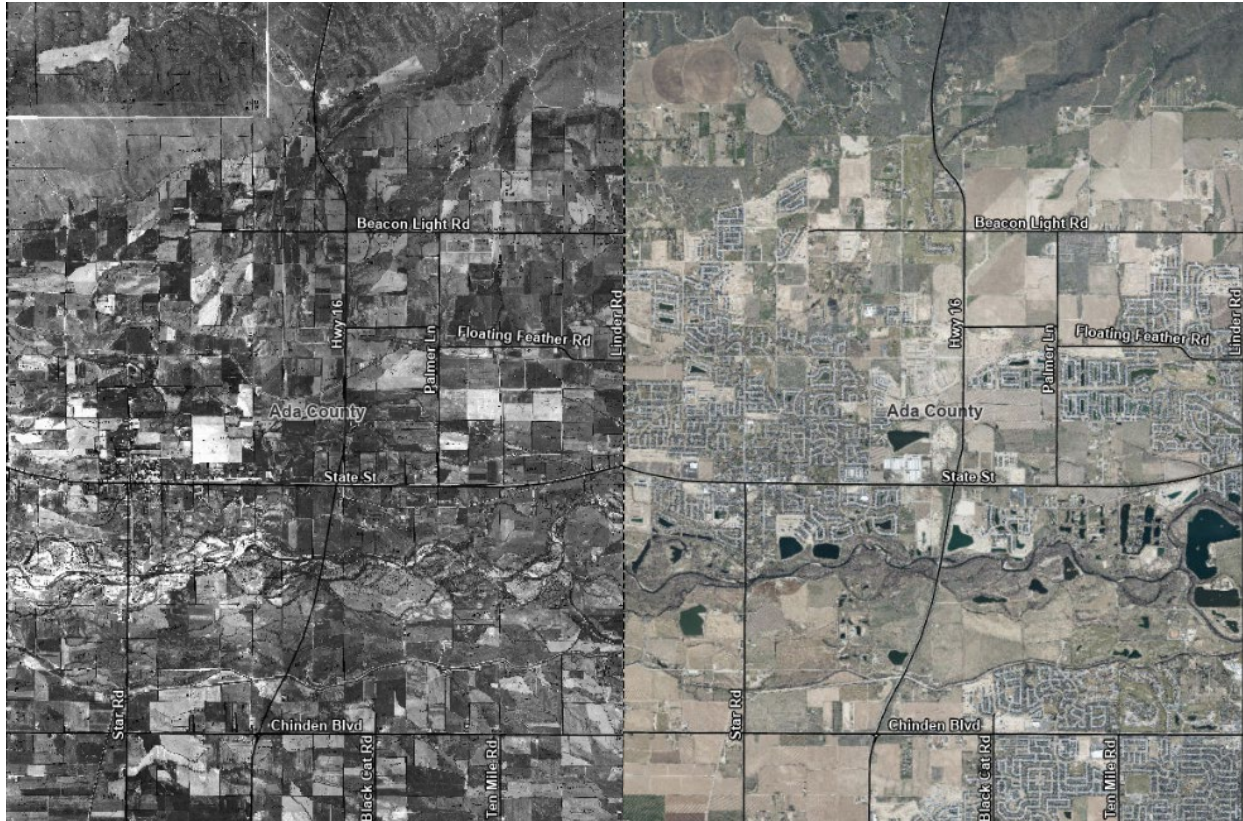
<sup>133</sup> Ada County, 2017, 18.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

<sup>137</sup> City of Star, “History of Star”.



**Aerial photographs of Star Idaho. 1964 on left and 2022 on right showing the change from farmland to suburbia.**

## HISTORIC PROPERTY TYPES

Ada County contains many different historic property types from archeological to postmodern buildings and structures. Some examples of these properties follow below.

### NATIVE AMERICAN/PRE-CONTACT/ARCHAEOLOGICAL

Archaeological investigation within Ada County follows multiple time periods. A total of three archaeological sites in Ada County are listed in the National Register including Dry Creek Rockshelter, the Guffey-Black Butte Archaeological District and the Barber Dam and Lumber Mill Historical Archaeological Site (National Register Reference #78001037).<sup>138</sup>

<sup>138</sup> Michael Ostrogrosky, 1978, "Barber Dam and Lumber Mill Historical Archeological Site National Register of Historic Places Inventory - Nomination Form." (National Register Reference #78001037) On file at Idaho State Historic Preservation Office, Boise, Idaho. The other two National Register listed archeological sites are not footnoted here due to sensitive information.



## AGRICULTURAL

There is a myriad of agricultural property types in Ada County which include historic ranches, homesteads, barns, poultry sheds, all kinds agricultural outbuildings, silos, pumphouses, and irrigation ditches.



**Schick-Ostolasa horse barn (National Register Reference #06000710).**

One example of an agricultural property is the Schick-Ostolasa homestead (National Register Reference #06000710) located north of Boise in Hidden Springs. It was built in 1864 by Phillip Schick, one of the first homesteaders in the area, and represents the evolution of early homesteading in the 1860s, to “gentleman ranching” by the mid-twentieth century, and eventually into large-scale ranching by the end of the century. It consists of multiple buildings: a farmhouse, cook house, root cellar, wood shed,

saddle barn, horse barn, and chicken house.<sup>139</sup>

## IRRIGATION

Irrigation resources in Ada County are both private irrigation canals and public canals owned by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and/or managed by the Boise Board of Control. They consist of diversion dams, irrigation canals of all shapes and sizes from earthen to the concrete lined New York Canal, powerhouses for hydro-electric generation, pumping plants, gaging stations, reservoirs, drains, warehouses, shops, sheds, and other buildings within irrigation headquarters complexes and ditchrider housing.

The USRS’s Boise Diversion Dam and Powerplant (National Register Reference #76000666) was constructed in two phases 1906-1909, for new headworks of the existing New York Canal that the agency was rebuilding, and then from 1911-1912 for the hydroelectric powerplant. The dam and powerplant are still in use today. In 2000-2004, the electrical and generating components were rehabilitated with preservation of it’s historic features in the process. Three new generators were installed in the powerplant, increasing its generating capacity to 3,300 kilowatts. The dam, powerhouse, and Deer Flat Embankments, which create Lake Lowell, were listed on the National Register as a historic district in 1976. <sup>140</sup>

<sup>139</sup> Donna Hartmans, 2006, “Schick/Ostolasa Farmstead National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.” (National Register Reference #06000710) On file at Idaho State Historic Preservation Office, Boise, Idaho.

<sup>140</sup> National Park Service, “Idaho: Boise River Diversion Powerplant” <https://www.nps.gov/articles/idaho-boise-river-diversion-powerplant.htm>. Accessed April 30, 2025.



**USRS Boise Diversion Dam and Powerplant (National Register Reference #76000666).**

## INSTITUTIONAL

As Ada County became more populated public/civic buildings were built and some like Star had the schoolhouse built before anything else was. Institutional buildings such as government buildings, churches, schools, and camps reflect the civic and cultural development of the county. These buildings can be humble to exotic in their designs, shapes and sizes.

The Assay Office (National Register Reference #66000305) is located on Main Street in downtown Boise. Built in 1870-1871, to test the quality of gold and silver from mines throughout Idaho, it became a symbol of the importance of mining in the economic development of Idaho and the Far West. It is so significant that it is listed as a National Historic Landmark, one of just four buildings in Idaho.<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> Alexis Matrone, personal communication, June 24, 2025.



**Assay Office (National Register Reference #66000305).**

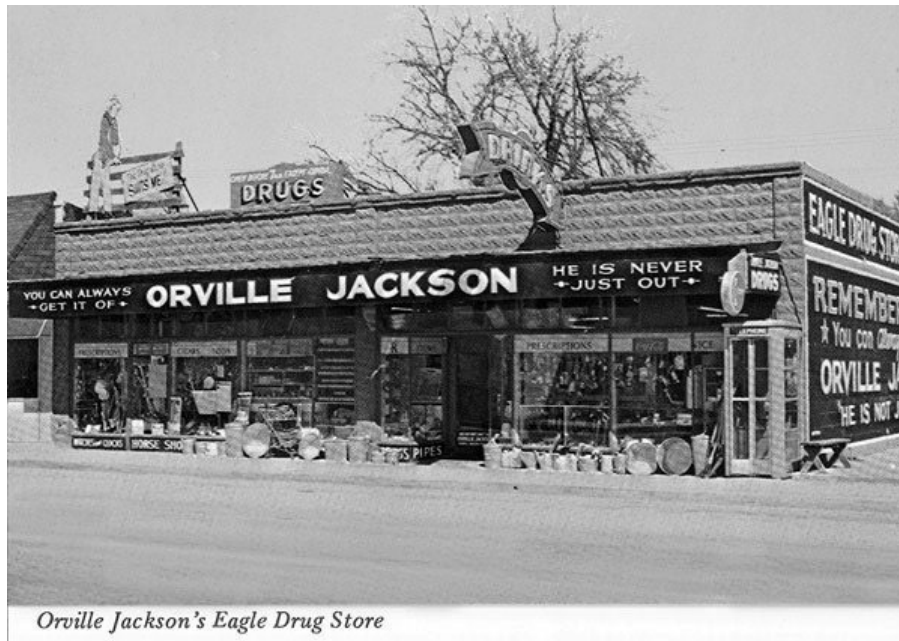
## COMMERCIAL

Ada County has a plethora of historic commercial buildings. Many in small towns are One-Part Commercial buildings, but there is a smattering of Two-Part Commercial Block buildings. As Boise has always been the largest city in Ada County, there are One-Part Commercial, Two-Part Commercial, Enframed Window Wall, Stacked Vertical Block, Two-Part Vertical Block, Three-Part Vertical Block, to name just a few that can be found there. All types of architectural styles are within Ada County. Some commercial building architectural styles include, Italianate, Renaissance Revival, Neo-Classical, Sullivanesque, Art Moderne, Googie and New Formalism.

The Orville Jackson Drug Store in Eagle is a good example of the One-Part Commercial that is composed of cast stone. This local landmark was run by Orville Jackson from 1924-1976 and was the center of commerce and conversation for the community of Eagle. His store did not just sell drugs or have a soda fountain, but it “carried a wide variety of merchandise from veterinary products to gold pans, mining supplies, horse and mule shoes and shepherd’s bathtubs”<sup>142</sup>

<sup>142</sup> Jim Reynolds, “Orville Jackson”, Talking Points circa. 2012.





*Orville Jackson's Eagle Drug Store*

The National Register listed Lilyquist-Christianson Building (National Register Reference #99000415) in Kuna is a good example of a brick Italianate Two-Part Commercial building. Built in 1909, its original owner Charles Lilyquist died during its construction, but his son-in-law A.C. Christianson finished the work and opened up the Lilyquist General Merchandise Store. In 1914, he sold the general merchandise business and opened up a hardware store at this location. It is one of the few commercial buildings built in the early years of Kuna that today conveys its early history..<sup>143</sup>



**Lilyquist-Christianson Building shown in the center (National Register Reference #99000415).**

<sup>143</sup>Arlene O'Leary, 1999, "Lilyquist-Christianson Building, National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form (National Register Reference #99000415), Section 8 page 1 & Section 8 page 2.



## RESIDENTIAL

Ada County's historic dwellings range from log cabins to mid-century modern ranch homes. They include a variety of styles, sizes, shapes, and include architect designed building to vernacular structures built by the landowner. Architectural styles include, Log, Victorian, Classical Revival, Queen Anne, Second Empire, Eastlake, Craftsman, I-House, Eclectic, Flemish Romantic, Colonial Revival, Gothic Revival, Tudor Revival, Dutch Colonial Revival, Greek Revival, Beaux Arts, Italianate, Richardson Romanesque, Mission, Minimal Traditional, Art Moderne, Streamline Moderne, Ranch, and Split-Level to just name a few.

The Orville Jackson House (National Register Reference #82000213) is a one-and a half story Tudor Revival Style residence in Eagle. Designed by Tourtellotte and Hummel, this home was built in 1932 for Orville Jackson. It is listed in the National Register for its architecture..<sup>144</sup>



**Orville Jackson House (National Register Reference #82000213).**

## TRANSPORTATION

Transportation was key to the development of Ada County from the Oregon Trail to the OSL and the interurbans to highways and today I-84 Interstate Highway. The OSL, Idaho Central, and the interurban electric railways not only connected the towns of Ada County but also were a conduit to other markets in Idaho and across the Nation. Ferry

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<sup>144</sup> "Jackson, Orville, House", 1982, Inventory Sheet for Group Nominations (National Register Reference #82000213): Idaho Historical Society, Boise, Idaho.

sites, bridges, wagon roads, state highways, railroad tracks, buildings, and bridges are found throughout the county and were instrumental in connecting communities.

The Ninth Street Bridge (National Register Reference #01000980) is located at the end of Eighth Street behind the main branch of the Boise Public Library across the Boise River. It was engineered by LaPointe and Fox for the Missouri Valley Bridge and Iron Company and completed in 1911. It was listed in the National Register because of its engineering design.<sup>145</sup> It is one of the most important pin-connected Pratt truss bridges in Idaho and only one of eight that have multiple spans or arches.



**Ninth Street Bridge (National Register Reference #01000980). Photograph taken on 7/5/2018 by Wyatt Perry**

## RECREATION

Sites related to this recreation include fairgrounds, rodeo grounds, theatres, speedways and raceways along with other buildings and the unusual geologic feature of the Kuna Cave.

The Meridian Speedway (National Register Reference #100008284) was listed on the National Register on February 28, 2024 and is “the Gem State's only circuit racetrack that is continuously in operation and is one of only four paved quarter mile racetracks to exist in the state.”<sup>146</sup> It is listed in the National Register at the local level as a stock car and racing facility which is directly associated “with the agricultural and social history of the city of Meridian and Ada County”.<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> Donald W. Watts, 2001, “Ninth Street Bridge National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.”, 3.

<sup>146</sup> KTVB, “Meridian Speedway added to ‘National Register of Historic Places’ list”

<https://www.ktvb.com/article/news/local/meridian-speedway-list-national-register-historic-places/277-194fb2f4-03a7-4916-974e-427cf04add03>. Accessed on March 3, 2025.

<sup>147</sup> Barbara Perry Bauer, 2022, “Meridian Speedway National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.”, Section 7 page 43 & Section 7 page 45.





**Meridian Speedway (National Register Reference #100008284).**

## SECTION 2: CURRENT STATE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION IN ADA COUNTY

### ADA COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COUNCIL

Section 101(c)(1) of the NHPA created a certification of local governments to carry out preservation activities and grants outlined in the Act. Ada County was designated a CLG and as a CLG Ada County created the Council on August 25, 1988, (by ordinance #192) to administer these activities.<sup>148</sup> As Ada County's representative the Council is part of the review process in nominating a historic property for inclusion in the National Register and is eligible to receive matching grants from the National Park Service that are distributed by the SHPO. These grants are used on a wide range of projects to support Ada County's historic preservation efforts.

The Council is to "preserve significant historical structures and sites within Ada County by identifying and documenting those structures and sites of historic value, reviewing development applications that might impact an identified historic structure or site, and educating the public on preserving historic structures and sites through education and outreach activities."<sup>149</sup> The Council is composed of seven to ten volunteer Council members that commit to serve a three-year term and are appointed by the Board of Ada County Commissioners.

The group meets once per month, usually at the Ada County Courthouse. The three elected positions of chairman, vice chairman and secretary are voted on annually. Staff support, including record keeping, coordination with federal, state and local agencies, website maintenance and review of development applications, is provided by Ada County Development Services staff.

<sup>148</sup> National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, 1983, 12.

<sup>149</sup> Ada County, "Historic Preservation" <https://adacounty.id.gov/historicpreservation/>. Accessed on February 28, 2025.

## PAST PRESERVATION EFFORTS

Idaho's history of historic preservation began in 1881 with the creation of the Historic Society of Idaho Pioneers. This group wanted to preserve the pioneer story of the founding of Idaho Territory. In 1907, this group was followed by the ISHS which was a more formal organization administered under the State of Idaho to preserve Idaho's history. Smaller historical organizations were formed in Ada County such as the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Sons and Daughters of Idaho Pioneers, the Columbia Club and others over the years. The Daughters of the American Revolution spearheaded the restoration of the O'Farrell Cabin in 1912, along with many other historic sites and buildings. With the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act in 1966 local preservationists got a boost with this legislation, but more was needed. Idaho passed legislation for the creation of historic preservation commissions in 1975. In Ada County, the city of Boise was the first to use this legislation to create a commission in 1976, Meridian, Eagle and Ada County formed commissions by the late 1980s.

The role of the Council since its inception has been undertaking surveys and inventories of historic sites throughout Ada County while educating the public on the importance of historic preservation, including creating the County Treasures Program in 2003. The County Treasures program creates awareness of structures, buildings or sites which are worthy of preservation in Ada County and encourages the private owners to preserve them..<sup>150</sup>

Current preservation efforts since 2006 include a 2008 Ada County Historic Sites Inventory, 2014 Grange Halls Survey, 2018 Oregon Trail Survey in Eastern Ada County, 2020 Rural Kuna Historic Sites Inventory, and the 2022 Garden City State Street Survey..<sup>151</sup>

Ada County and the Council also have worked with a developer to help preserve three historic buildings/structures in the Dry Creek Ranch Planned Community. During the entitlement of the Dry Creek Ranch Planned Community in 2017 there was a condition of approval which required prior to the approval of the final plat encompassing the historic farmhouse and icehouse the developer needed to submit a conceptual plan showing how these structures would be utilized, enhanced, and integrated into the overall site-design of the Dry Creek Ranch Planned Community. From a series of meetings with the developer and the public on how to best preserve the historic buildings/structures in Dry Creek Ranch a feed and hay barn was added to the icehouse and farmhouse to be preserved in the farmstead complex. From these meetings a historic preservation plan was developed which had provisions for allowed future uses of the farmhouse along with restoration actions for the farmhouse and barn and a façade and use easement to be held by Ada County. The easement requires compliance with the historic preservation plan as well as getting permission from Ada County for any alterations to the historic structures.

## SECTION 3: 2024 SURVEY

As part of the public outreach for the update to Ada County's Historic Preservation Plan update, the Council conducted a survey of Ada County residents in August and September 2024. The purpose of the survey was to identify what is important to the community and where to focus our efforts in the future.

There were 69 responses to 15 questions about the current state of historic preservation in Ada County. The Survey Questions were as follows:

1. *Describe your interest in Ada County's History & Heritage?*
2. *Which types of historic properties or sites do you think represent Ada County's history or heritage the best?*

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<sup>150</sup> Ada County Historic Preservation Council, 2008, "County Treasure" [brochure], 1.

<sup>151</sup> Ada County, "Historic Sites" <https://adacounty.id.gov/historicpreservation/historic-sites/> Accessed January 17, 2025.



3. *How beneficial do you feel Historic Preservation is to the following:*
  - a. *Community character*
  - b. *Understanding Ada County's past*
  - c. *Local/heritage tourism*
  - d. *Economic development*
  - e. *Sustainability*
4. *What types of historic resources are important to you?*
5. *Indicate your opinion regarding the following statements on whether you agree, disagree, or are neutral:*
  - a. *Ada County needs more historic sites to be identified and designated on the National Register of Historic Places?*
  - b. *Ada County has regulations and/or incentives to protect and preserve historic properties?*
  - c. *Designating a site as historic and getting it on the National Register of Historic Places will interfere with an owner's property rights.*
  - d. *Is it beneficial to the community to repurpose historic structures to other uses to save the building?*
6. *What do you believe to be the most serious threat to historic structures and sites in Ada County?*
7. *What type of historic properties or sites do you think are the most vulnerable to demolition or neglect?*
8. *What type of community outreach would you be interested in participating?*
9. *In what ways do you think the Ada County Historic Preservation Council can help owners of historic properties in preserving their historic structures?*
10. *What should be the biggest priorities for historic preservation in Ada County?*
11. *What area of Ada County do you live?*
12. *Age Demographics*
13. *What is your favorite historic site in Ada County?*
14. *What historic places in Ada County do you think help tell the story of our community?*
15. *Are there any historic subject matter areas of Ada County that you would like to learn more about?*

People from all walks of life and ages in Ada County replied to the survey. Citizens, historical society members, tourists, and owners of historical homes/businesses were some of the respondents. People responded from not only Boise, but Star, Meridian, Kuna, and all areas in-between. Historic homes and neighborhoods were viewed by respondents as best representing Ada County's heritage. Likewise, community character was seen as the best benefit of historic preservation. In regard to what type of historic resources were seen as the most important to Ada County, respondents said that agricultural structures (barns, silos, farmhouses, etc.) and these structures were

also seen as the most vulnerable to demolition or neglect. Redevelopment and/or infill development was seen as the most serious threat to historic structures and sites in Ada County.

Access to historic properties from tours, educational presentations, social media and websites were areas in which people wanted to participate. This reflects a change since the 2007 Historic Preservation Plan on the importance of the digital age to reach Ada County populace. Likewise, respondents felt that the Council should focus on helping owners of historic properties to go beyond a determination of eligibility or local nomination and become listed in the National Register, if eligible. In addition, documentation and identification of historical properties was seen as the biggest priority for the Council. Favorite historic sites in Ada County were varied with large impressive architectural buildings like the Boise Depot but also smaller simpler architecture like the Schick-Ostolasa Farmstead. As to what sites help tell the story of Ada County responses were varied with one respondent stating “[a]ll of Ada County, from the Boise River to the foothill[s] Each city has its own history to tell.” The most popular sites were the Schick-Ostolasa Farmstead and the Old Idaho Penitentiary, with many different properties throughout Ada County, from the Oregon Trail ruts to the Erma Hayman house. Areas that county residents wanted to learn more about also varied greatly with only irrigation having the most responses. Many people want to know the history of irrigation and its role in Ada County. Irrigation certainly transformed the county, and its impact is still felt today.

The comments received from the survey helped the Council to identify what is important to the public and led to the formulation of many of the goals, objectives, and strategies in the plan. In addition, we also reached out to the city historic preservation commissions, the Canyon County Historic Preservation Commission, and other history minded organizations in Ada County and asked them how the Council could partner and help them. During the last few years, the Council has made connections and partnered with some of these organizations and have found those relationships to be very beneficial. This simple question yielded a great idea from the Canyon County Historic Preservation Commission about having a joint social networking event with them as the groups are similar and face some of the same challenges. In the Spring of 2025, the Council and the Canyon County Historic Preservation Commission had their first social networking event at the Schick-Ostolasa Farmstead and both groups are looking forward to more.

## SECTION 4: ADA COUNTY GOALS & OBJECTIVES

### GOAL 1: IDENTIFY & DESIGNATE HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Conduct surveys of Ada County’s historic resources and update and maintain Ada County’s Historic Sites Survey.

1. Utilize the Idaho Cultural Resource Information System (ICRIS) to identify areas in Ada County for further surveys and studies.
2. Conduct surveys of historic properties on a regular basis to determine eligibility of new properties for listing in the National Register.
3. Periodically resurvey past survey areas to determine if there are new sites or structures, which may be eligible for listing in the National Register.
4. Regularly update Ada County’s Historic Site Survey with newly identified historic resources from ICRIS, surveys, and studies.
5. Document historic interpretive signs and facilities.
6. Pursue National Register nominations of historic properties following the National Park Service criteria.
7. Provide technical assistance to property owners pursuing listing their property in the National Register.
  - a. Host workshops and additional trainings for individuals interested in listing their property in the National Register of Historic Places.
    - i. Consult with SHPO to determine eligibility of property for listing.
    - ii. Work with SHPO and other interested parties on the listing process which will include expectations and National Park Service guidelines.
    - iii. Work with individuals on photography and research requirements.

- b. Assist SHPO with ongoing efforts to identify and develop “Multiple Property Documents” for specific resource types in Ada County.
- c. Identify repositories of historical information that residents would need to complete a National Register listing.

## GOAL 2: INTEGRATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION INTO COUNTY POLICY & REGULATIONS

Incorporate historic preservation into the County’s land use planning efforts to provide incentives and encouragement to property owners and developers to include and retain historic resources in their development proposals.

1. Work with the Ada County Development Services Department to develop regulatory mechanisms for preserving historic structures and/or sites in unincorporated Ada County.
  - a. Develop regulatory incentives to assist and encourage property owners to preserve historic structures and sites such as density bonuses, etc.
  - b. Explore provisions for demolition review.
2. Periodically review policies within all applicable comprehensive plans that have a potential future impact on historic resources located in Ada County.
3. Review development applications and provide comments on the potential impact to historic resources, sites, and structures.
4. Coordinate with the Ada County Building Official and the fire districts for building code and fire code compliance for rehabilitation or changes in building occupancy of historic structures.
5. Explore options for creating additional state or local financial incentives in regulations to encourage the preservation of historic resources.

## GOAL 3: PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Encourage private investment in the rehabilitation and reuse of historic buildings.

1. Encourage property owners to maintain historic resources and/or find new uses for historic buildings rather than demolition.
  - a. Provide developers and property owners with examples of historic buildings that have been repurposed to a new use. In particular, how a new development could incorporate agricultural structures into the development.
2. Explore methods of how historic structures could be adaptively reused.
3. Federal tax credits.
4. Explore regulatory incentives that encourages property owners to retain and maintain historic properties.
5. Commemorate anniversaries and milestones of historic sites and structures.
6. Continue to use the County Treasure Award and Making History Award programs as a way to bring attention to and educate the public on historic preservation and resources.

## GOAL 4: PROMOTE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Strive for broad and productive public participation and input in all historic preservation activities of the Council.

1. All meetings of the Council will be open to the public.
2. The Council will encourage the participation of the public, agencies, and other historic groups and organizations.
3. The Council will be transparent and will post meeting agendas and minutes on the Council’s webpage.

## GOAL 5: EDUCATE WHY HISTORIC PRESERVATION IS IMPORTANT

Educate and promote Ada County’s historic, architectural, archaeological, and cultural heritage to the public.

1. Identify and promote the benefits of listing in the National Register.
2. Encourage property owners to follow the standards in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
3. Provide examples to property owners or individuals involved in the restoration and rehabilitation of historic structures.
4. Develop a network of resources to help owners of historic properties to maintain and restore their historic structures.
5. Utilize social media to engage, educate, and inform the public on the importance of historic preservation.
6. Provide the public with opportunities to experience historic preservation.
  - a. Historic building tours.
  - b. Historic driving, biking, and walking tours.
7. Seek a variety of ways to educate the public of Ada County's rich historic legacy.
  - a. Public outreach to non-CLG communities such as Kuna, Star, and Garden City.
  - b. Community and School Presentations
    - i. Chronicles of Ada County Presentation.
    - ii. Thematic Subject Matter Presentations such as Irrigation, Tribal History, and the Chinese community that was a part of Boise and Garden City.
8. Find ways to instill a love of history and preservation to the youth of Ada County.
  - a. School Presentations
  - b. Contests
9. Encourage and work with the Ada County Parks and Waterways Department to include interpretive signage and kiosks on recreation sites maintained by Ada County.
10. Educate the public on available tax credits for restoration of historic buildings/structures.

#### GOAL 6: DEVELOP PARTNERSHIPS

Work with other government agencies and jurisdictions to promote the educational, cultural, economic, and general welfare of the public through the protection of historic buildings, resources, and sites.

1. Coordinate with other Ada County departments and offices to document the public history of Ada County and to maintain historic resources on County owned land.
2. Be a resource to other Ada County departments, cities, and neighboring counties.
3. Partner with other historic groups and organizations to collaborate and share ideas.
  - a. Invite them to the Council's meetings.
  - b. Send them the Council's meeting agendas and minutes.
  - c. Host and/or attend social and educational events.
  - d. Coordinate with and support the efforts of the SHPO.
4. Partner with other historic groups and organizations to promote historic preservation.
  - a. Develop activities, presentations, or social media posts to support SHPO's annual theme for Idaho Archaeology and Historic Preservation Month.
5. Coordinate with Idaho's colleges and universities.

#### GOAL 7: MANAGE & EXPAND PUBLIC INFORMATION ABOUT HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Ensure the efficient and effective management of historic site information; provide public access to historic site information.

1. Maintain a website to provide information of the Council with the public.
2. Place information and resources on the Council's webpage.
3. Maintain and add new properties to Ada County's Historic Preservation Interactive Map.
4. Find ways to leverage ICRIS and GIS to facilitate historic site research and to convey information to the public.



## GOAL 8: FACILITATE COUNCIL TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Provide educational opportunities to members and staff of the Ada County Historic Preservation Council.

1. Attend educational events and trainings that are put on by other historic groups such as SHPO and the National Alliance of Historic Preservation Commissions (NAPC).

## STRATEGIES FOR ADA COUNTY

Growth within Ada County and its sister cities over the last couple of decades has converted agricultural lands into suburban and urban development, which has resulted in the loss of some historic agricultural structures within Ada County. The Council recognizes that growth will continue to occur within Ada County and its sister cities and finds that strategies need to be developed to protect the remaining historic buildings/structures.

## INCENTIVES

One of the strategies to save historic structures in a community that is experiencing growth is to explore incentives that encourage property owners and developers to retain historic building/structures. Incentives can be both financial and regulatory.

Financial incentives include the Federal Tax Credit for Historic Preservation, which provides a 20 percent federal tax credit to property owners who undertake a substantial rehabilitation of a historic building for commercial or income producing use while maintaining its historic character. Many property owners may not know about this tax credit. As a strategy the Council seeks to educate the public about the Federal Tax Credit. In the next few years, the Council will look to develop brochures and/or social media posts that educate the public about the tax credit as well as identifying successful projects in the area that have utilized the Federal Tax Credit.

Regulatory incentives for historic preservation include zoning flexibility. The Council will work with the Ada County Development Services Department to identify zoning, permitting, or building regulations that would encourage and benefit property owners to retain and rehabilitate historic structures.

A new regulatory process the Council wants to explore is a demolition review process. The Council realizes that not every historic building/structure is going to be saved from demolition, but documenting those buildings/structures before they are lost is crucial for preserving their history and significance. The Council will work with the Ada County Development Services Department to develop a process and regulations that would allow for historic building/structures to be documented for their historic significance before demolition.

## EDUCATION

For financial and regulatory incentives to work the public needs to be informed of why historic preservation is important and how it benefits the community. Throughout the year the Council will utilize social media to promote and inform the public about historic preservation activities taking place. The Council will also work with the Board of Ada County Commissioners to continue our annual County Treasure Award and Making History Award programs.

The County Treasure Award honors sites or structures that add to Ada County's heritage. This award is a way for Ada County to recognize owners of historic properties for their efforts at preserving these sites, buildings, and structures. In addition, it showcases to the public the variety of historic properties in Ada County from historic farmsteads to a racetrack.

The Making History Award honors people or organizations whose activities today are creating our future history. The award recognizes the award recipient's long-term commitment to our communities and the lasting legacy they have created for current and future generations in Ada County. This award highlights the important contributions that

people have made in preserving our history. The public gets to see the variety of people and organizations who have made an impact.

#### ENCOURAGING ADAPTIVE REUSE

The Council realizes that things change over time and how a structure was originally used may not be feasible in the present or in the future. Therefore, it is important to find ways for historic buildings to be adapted into new uses while the building still preserves its historic character and features. As a strategy it is important to inform the public and property owners that a historic structure such as a barn could be utilized for another use such as a wedding event center. The Council will utilize social media to showcase local examples of historic buildings that have gone through adaptive reuse. This could include interviews with the architects and builders associated with these reuse projects as well as a tour of the structure.

## ACRONYMS

CLG- Certified Local Government  
Council - Ada County Historic Preservation Council  
ISHS – Idaho State Historical Society  
NAPC - National Alliance of Historic Preservation Commissions  
NHPA – National Historic Preservation Act  
NPS -National Park Service  
National Register – National Register of Historic Places  
National Trust – National Trust for Historic Preservation  
OSL – Oregon Short Line  
SHPO – Idaho State Historical Preservation Office  
U.S. – United States  
USRS – United States Reclamation Service

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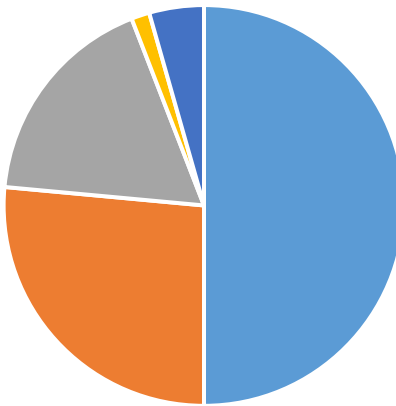
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## APPENDIX A

### SURVEY RESULTS

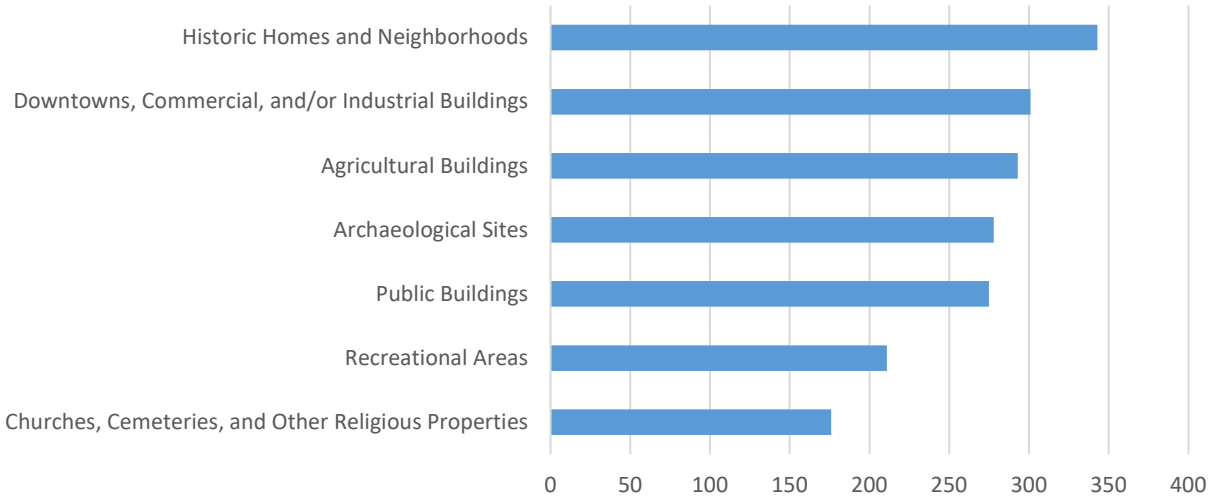
The survey, taken in the fall of 2024, identified several key areas of historic resources to Ada County residents. Many of these responses were similar to those in the 2007 Historic Preservation Plan with agricultural resources still seen as the most threatened and important to county residents. A majority of respondents wanted to have more historic sites identified and saved in adaptive reuse, or just to have the property listed on the National Register. With the ever-increasing growth in Ada County since 2007, development and redevelopment and/or infill development was seen as the biggest threat to historic buildings, structures, and sites. Historic Preservation is something that people can see, and touch and tours of historic properties, educational presentations and social media were seen as the best means of community outreach.

#### Describe your interest in Ada County's history and heritage?

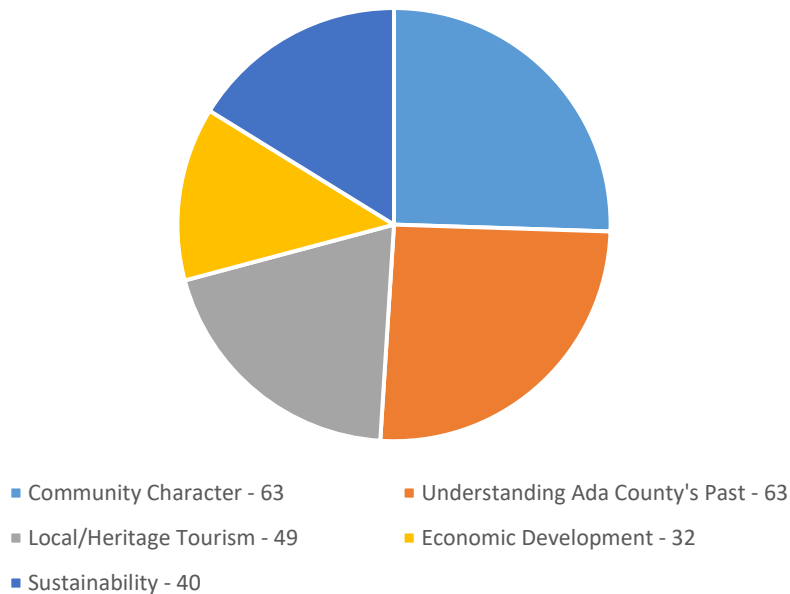


- Citizen interested in preserving Ada County's history and heritage - 34
- Member of a historical society or historic preservation organization - 18
- Owner of a historic property or a resident in a historic district - 12
- Heritage Tourist - 1
- Other - 3

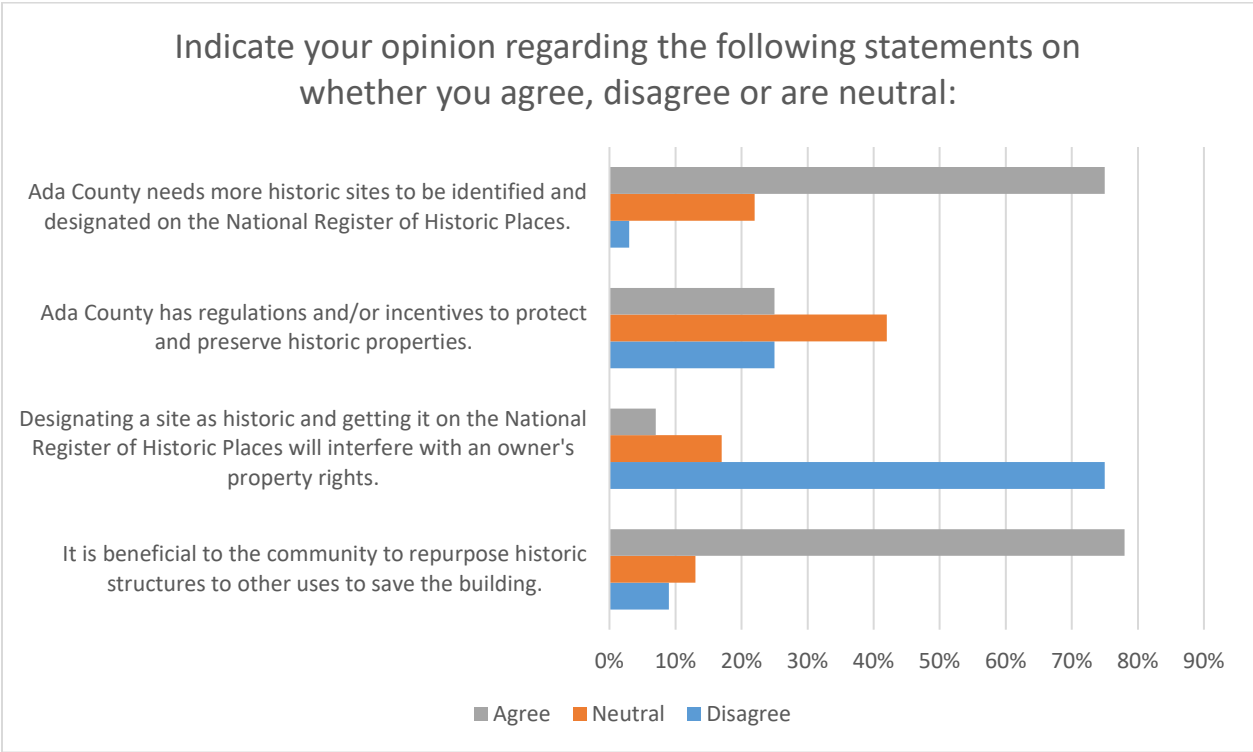
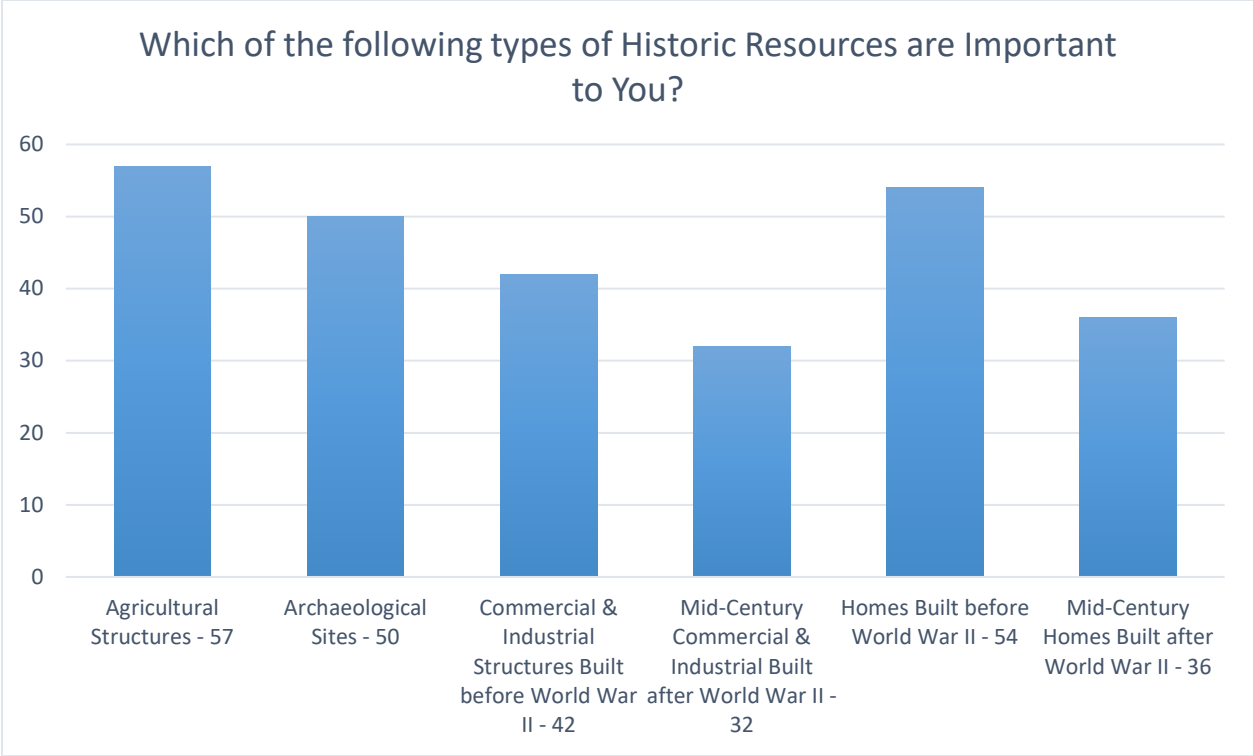
Which types of historic properties or sites do you think represent Ada County's history or heritage the best?  
Rank the following options in order of most important (top) to least important (bottom)



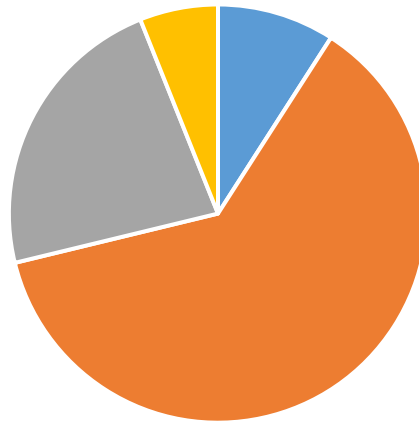
How beneficial do you feel Historic Preservation is to the following?





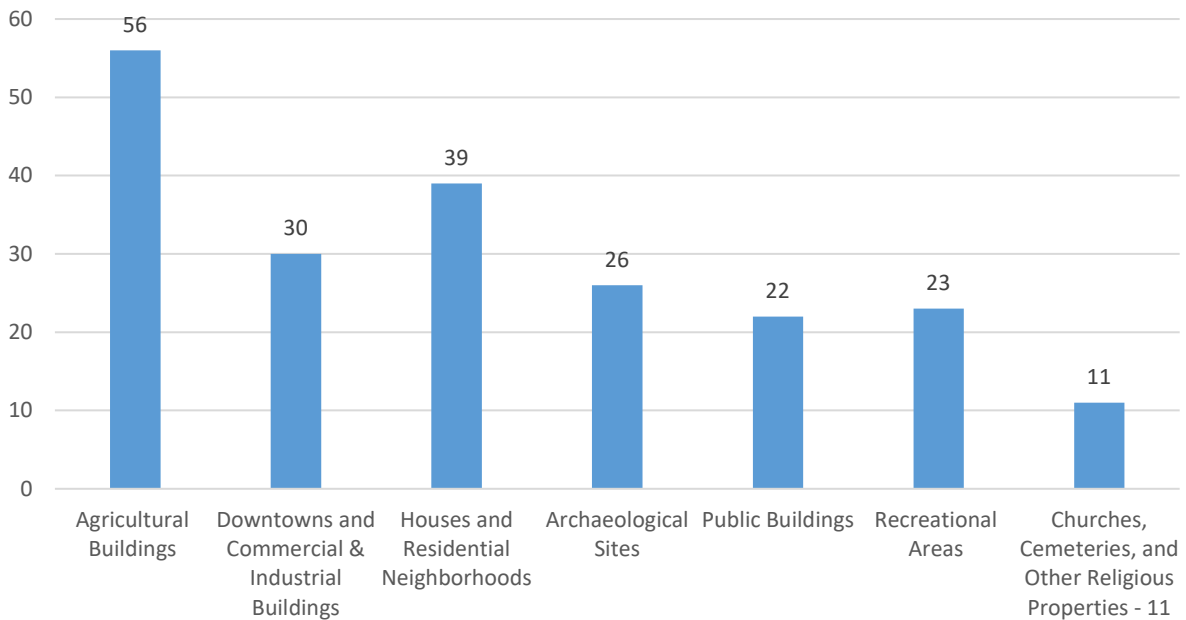


### What do you believe to be the most serious threat to historic structures and sites in Ada County?

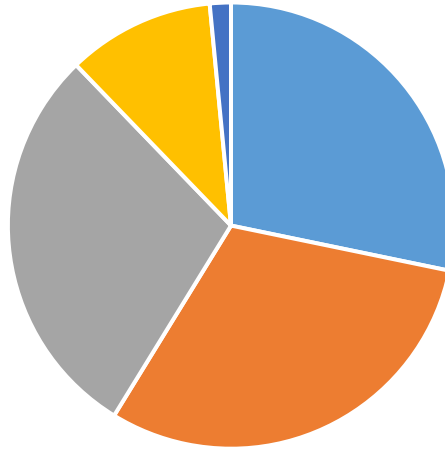


- Property Owner Neglect - 6
- Redevelopment and/or Infill Development - 41
- Development Encroaching onto Agricultural Lands - 15
- Other - 4

### What types of historic properties or sites do you think are the most vulnerable to demolition or neglect. Check all that apply

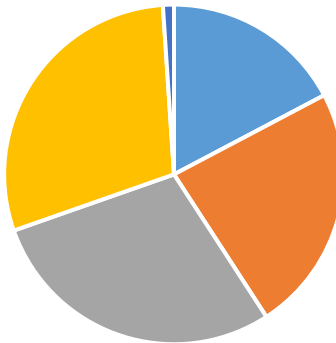


What types of community outreach would you be interested in participating? Check all that apply



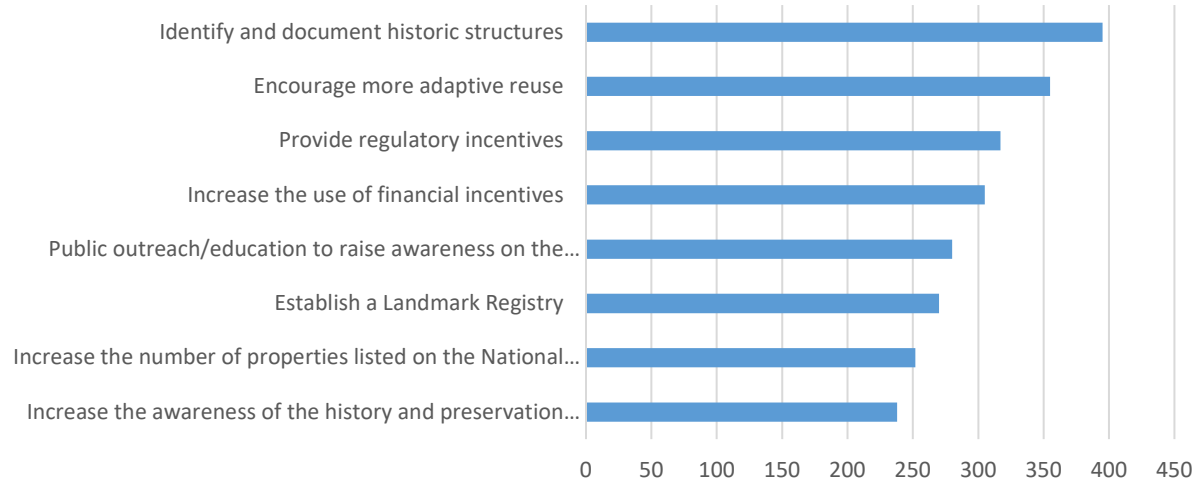
■ Social Media and Website - 37 ■ Tours of Historic Sites - 40 ■ Educational Presentation - 38  
■ Awards - 14 ■ Other - 2

In what ways do you think the Ada County Historic Preservation Council can help owners of historic properties in preserving their historic structures? Check all that apply

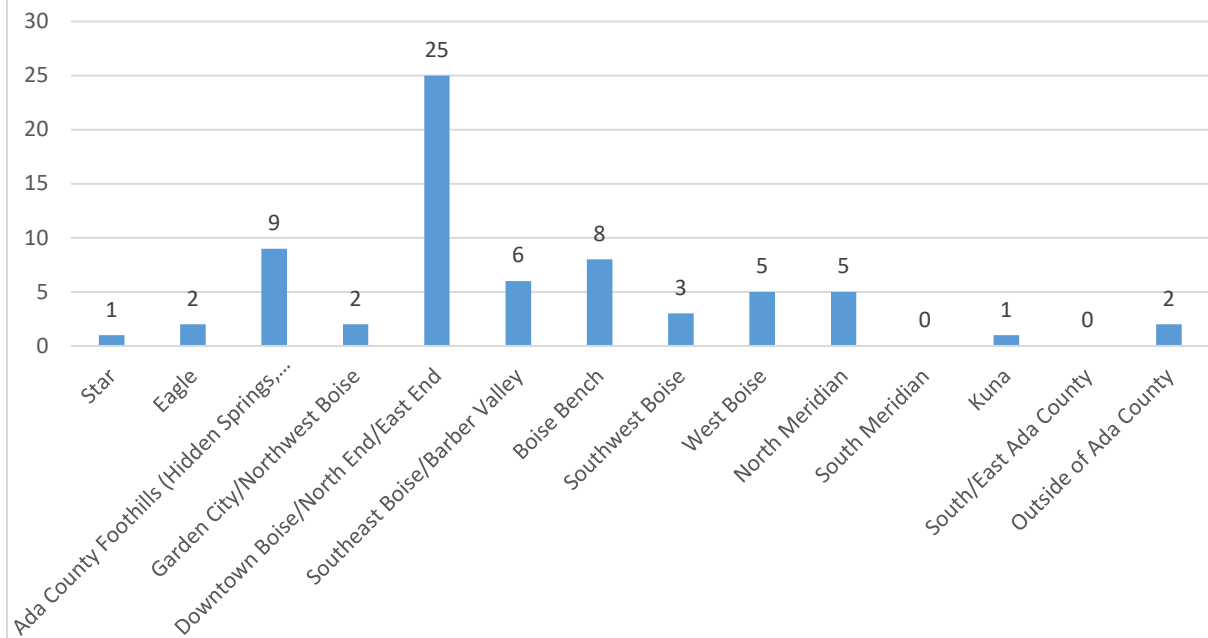


■ Develop brochures on restoring historic structures - 33  
■ Develop a list of building and design professionals who specialize in the restoration of historic structures - 45  
■ Assist property owners with National Register of Historic Places Designation - 55  
■ Advocate for financial and/or regulatory incentives - 56  
■ Other - 2

What should be the biggest priorities for historic preservation in Ada County? *Rank the following options in order of most important (top) to least important (bottom)*

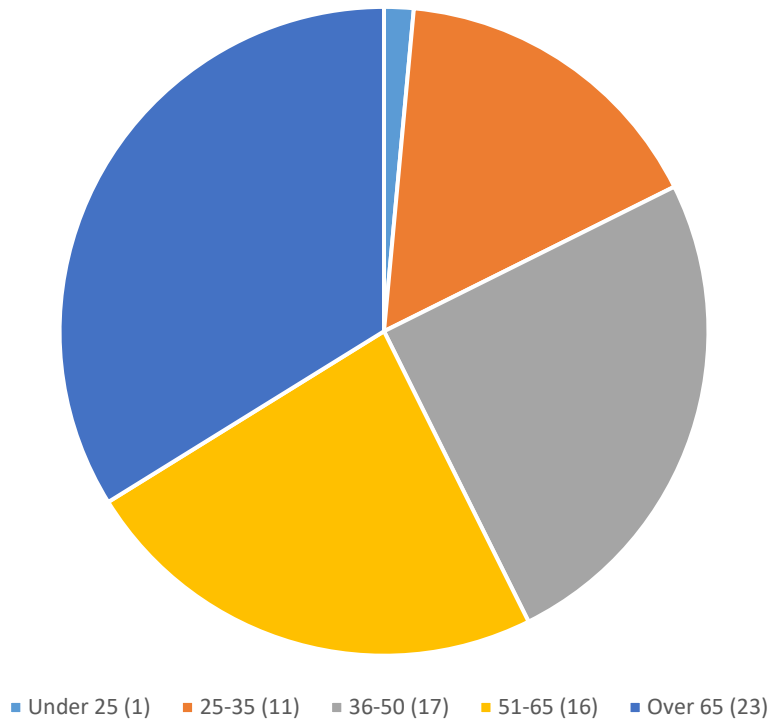


Where do you live?





### What is your age?



### What is Your Favorite Historic Site in Ada County

Site	Number of Respondents
Old Idaho Penitentiary Site	12
Schick-Ostolasa Farmstead	11
Idaho State Capitol Building	5
Boise Train Depot	3
Harrison Boulevard Historic District	3
U.S. Assay Office	3
Downtowns	2
Eggers Farm – Dual Silos	2
My Neighborhood / House	2
Warm Springs Historic District	2
Barber Dam	1
Basque Block	1
Boise Diversion Dam	1
CW Moore Park	1
Cyrus Jacobs – Uberuaga House	1
Highlands Community Fallout Shelter (Boise Bomb Shelter)	1
Historic Homes near Downtown	1
Historic Neighborhoods	1
Hyde Park Historic District	1
Initial Point	1

Intermountain Gas Campus	1
Kootenai Street (Boise)	1
Meridian Speedway	1
Military Cemetery	1
O'Farrell Cabin	1
Old Fire Station on Main Street (Boise)	1
Oregon Trail	1
Pioneer Building (Boise)	1
The Arlene Building	1
The Egyptian Theater	1

#### Historic Places that Tell the Story of Ada County

Site	Number of Respondents
Downtown Boise	10
Old Idaho Penitentiary Site	10
Oregon Trail	10
Schick-Ostolasa Farmstead	10
Agricultural Sites & Farmsteads	5
Garden City / Chinden Blvd	5
Historic Residential Homes	4
Idaho State Capitol Building	4
Basque Block	3
Bown House	3
Downtown Eagle	3
Downtown Kuna	3
Downtown Meridian	3
Downtown Start	3
Pioneer Cemetery	3
U.S. Assay Office	3
"Chinese District"	2
Boise River	2
Cemeteries	2
Foothills	2
Harrison Boulevard Historic District	2
Historic Public Buildings	2
Idanha Hotel	2
Mid Century Developments	2
Museums	2
North End Historic District	2
Old Boise Historic District	2
River Street (Boise)	2
Warm Springs Historic District	2
Adelman Mine	1
Anne Frank Memorial	1
Archaeological Sites	1
Art Deco Buildings	1
Barber Dam	1

Black History Museum	1
Boise Historic Districts	1
Boise Parks	1
Boise Train Depot	1
Bonneville Point	1
Carnegie Library	1
Churches	1
Eagle Island State Park	1
Erma Hayman House	1
Hyde Park Historic District	1
Irrigation Systems	1
Lucky Peak	1
Morris Hill Cemetery	1
National Register of Historic Places	1
New York Canal	1
O'Farrell Cabin	1
Old Ada County Courthouse	1
Old Armory	1
Swan Falls	1
The Bishops' House	1
Underground Tunnels	1

#### Historic Subject Matter Areas of Ada County that the Public Wants to Learn More About

1. Irrigation
2. Indigenous and Native History
3. Barn Restoration
4. Roadside Architecture
5. Agriculture & Homesteads
6. Mining
7. History of the Smaller Cities in Ada County
8. Fort Boise
9. History of the Chinese and Chinese Gardens
10. Ordinary People & Early Citizens of Ada County
11. Latinx History
12. Post World War II & Mid-Century Development
13. Underground Tunnels in Downtown Boise
14. Neighborhood Histories
15. Historic Business Leaders and Entrepreneurs
16. Interurban Line and Trolley History
17. Geothermal

## APPENDIX B

### HISTORIC PRESERVATION LAW

For the purposes of this historic preservation plan, it is important to have a basic understanding of the most significant Federal, State, and County preservation laws. Idaho's state, county, and local historic preservation and archaeology laws are built upon what the U.S. Government has done since 1906 with Federal legislation. These Federal acts (laws) or executive orders were designed to protect items on Federal lands and later undertakings that would impact Federal, state and private lands through Federal funding or approval.

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### FEDERAL LEGISLATION

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#### THE ANTIQUITIES ACT OF 1906

This first act was enacted June 8, 1906, in response to looting of archeological sites west of the Mississippi River by collectors, scientists, and private benefactors who were collecting for private or public museums in the U.S. and Europe. It established that the preservation and protection of archaeological and historical sites is the purview of the Federal Government, along with having Federal land management agencies develop a permitting process for survey whereas any objects collected were to go to educational institutions and not private collections. Beyond archaeology it gave the power to the "President of the United States to establish national monuments from existing federal lands."<sup>152</sup> This provision has been used almost 300 times for "preservation of historic places and structures, cultural landscapes, and other cultural resources developed over the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries" in our Nation.<sup>153</sup>

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#### THE HISTORIC SITES, BUILDINGS AND ANTIQUITIES ACT OF 1935

Enacted August 21, 1935, as part of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal, this act created the National Historic Landmarks program and incorporated the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) which was started in 1933 by the National Park Service.<sup>154</sup> In the 1930s, the HABS was a unique public-private partnership that involved the National Park Service, Library of Congress, and the American Institute of Architects. It put many unemployed, historians, architectural historians, architects, and photographers to work documenting historic properties that even in the 1930s were rapidly disappearing.<sup>155</sup> Later in 1969, the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) and in 2000, the Historic American Landscapes Survey (HALS) were added to this program.<sup>156</sup> Today the HABS, HAER and HALS are the gold standard for documenting historic properties.

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#### THE NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT OF 1966

While the prior preservation acts were a step for preservation of historic resources, there was no national register of historic places or laws that accounted for the impacts to historic properties. This changed after many years of lobbying by preservationists, when the NHPA was signed on October 15, 1966. By the 1960s, Urban Renewal had

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<sup>152</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, "Antiquities Act" <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/archeology/antiquities-act.htm>. Accessed on April 17, 2025.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> National Park Service, "Historic Sites Act of 1935" <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/archeology/historic-sites-act.htm>. Accessed on January 23, 2025.

<sup>155</sup> National Park Service, "Historic American Buildings Survey" <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/heritagedocumentation/habs.htm>. Accessed on January 23, 2025.

<sup>156</sup> National Park Service, "Historic American Engineering Record" <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/heritagedocumentation/haer.htm> and "Historic American Landscape Survey" <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/heritagedocumentation/hals.htm>. Accessed on January 23, 2025.



altered and destroyed many aspects of cities, towns, and the landscape of the Nation. While HABS had documented 12,000 places, by 1966 half of them had either been destroyed or damaged beyond repair.<sup>157</sup> This act established a truly national preservation program which included permanent institutions with a clearly defined process that would encourage the identification and protection of historic properties at the Federal level for undertakings and, indirectly, at the state and local level. The NHPA is the most “extensive preservation legislation ever enacted in the United States.”<sup>158</sup>

The NHPA now established “a wide-ranging partnership among the federal government, States, Indian Tribes, Native Hawaiians, local governments, nonprofit organizations, and the private sector” for the identification and preservation or mitigation of historic properties that would be affected by Federal undertakings. States and territories would now have to take on more responsibility for historic sites within their boundaries. The act also established the National Register as a more inclusive listing and protecting historic properties of all levels of significance. The National Register criteria addresses all levels of historic significance, including National, state and local, while embracing aesthetic, environmental and community values criteria for eligibility and listing of individual buildings, structures, objects, archaeological sites, or a historic district of such historic properties. The law also expanded the National Historic Landmarks registry that was first stated in the Historic Sites, Buildings and Antiquities Act of 1935, and required states and territories to have a State Historic Preservation Officer.<sup>159</sup> This act established the Secretary of the Interior Standards for the documentation in the Section 106 process where a Federal undertaking could have the potential to affect an historic property. The NHPA established the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to be involved in the Section 106 process when there is an adverse effect on historic properties. The act also created several tasks for the Secretary of the Interior with the Secretary of the Interior Professional Qualifications Standards for each discipline as it is practiced in historic preservation nationwide. Guidance was issued under the Secretary of the Interior Standards for the treatment of historic properties in preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction.<sup>160</sup> All Federal agencies were required to establish their own historic preservation programs with qualified staff for the identification, evaluation, and protection of historic properties controlled by or on Federal property under Section 110 for their eligibility for the National Register. The NHPA established the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, an independent Federal Agency, to be involved in the Section 106 process when there is an adverse effect to historic properties and to advise the President of the U.S. and Congress on historic preservation matters. The act was amended four times (1976, 1980, 1992 and 2016), which includes the addition and creation of the CLG program in 1980.<sup>161</sup>

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## U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION ACT OF 1966

With the growth of the Interstate System, coupled with the destruction brought upon by Urban Renewal, the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966 was passed. Within this Act is Section 4f which “provided for consideration of park and recreation lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites during transportation development.”<sup>162</sup> Section 4(f) is in addition to the National Historic Preservation Act for the Transportation Departments (Federal and State) which has very different requirements and “is a substantive law, [that] precludes

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<sup>157</sup> National Park Service, “National Historic Preservation Act”

<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/historicpreservation/national-historic-preservation-act.htm> Accessed on April 17, 2025.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

<sup>159</sup> National Park Service, “Roots of the National Historic Landmarks Program” <https://www.nps.gov/articles/roots-of-the-national-historic-landmarks-program.htm> Accessed on April 18, 2025.

<sup>160</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, “The Secretary of the Interior Professional Qualifications Standards” <https://www.doi.gov/pam/asset-management/historic-preservation/pqs> Accessed on April 18, 2025.

<sup>161</sup> National Park Service, “National Historic Preservation Act” <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/archeology/national-historic-preservation-act.htm>. Accessed on April 17, 2025.

<sup>162</sup> U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration

[https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env\\_topics/4f\\_tutorial/overview.aspx?h=e#h](https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_topics/4f_tutorial/overview.aspx?h=e#h). Accessed on April 17, 2025.

project approval if there is a use of a historic site when a prudent and feasible avoidance alternative is available.”<sup>163</sup>

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#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES PROTECTION ACT OF 1979

This Archaeological Resources Protection Act passed on October 31, 1979, was a response for “the need for more effective law enforcement tools to protect archeological resources on public lands.” Prior to this law there was a permitting process within the Antiquities Act “for archaeological investigations on federal lands and penalties for unauthorized removal of archeological objects and destruction of sites.” Although, after 73 years the Antiquities Act in practice it did not deter the criminal looting of archeological resources on Federal lands. The Archaeological Resources Protection Act corrected that by providing archeologists and law enforcement officials with tools to prosecute and protect archaeological resources on Federal land along with Indian lands. It also specified the requirements for permits for “archeological investigations that include planning for the disposition and management of collections” on Federal and Indian lands and “the development of regulations regarding curation of archeological collections” taken from these lands.<sup>164</sup>

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#### NATIVE AMERICAN GRAVES PROTECTION AND REPATRIATION ACT OF 1990

Signed into law on November 16, 1990, this law “addresses the repatriation and disposition of Native American human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony to lineal descendants, Indian Tribes, and Native Hawaiian organizations.”<sup>165</sup> Prior to this law, archeological survey and anthropological expeditions on tribes’ homelands, human remains, and objects were collected by private collectors, museums, and Federal agencies. This law was to correct this injustice upon Native Americans and Native Hawaiians when their ancestors remains were put on display or in storage for scientific examination. This law requires Federal agencies and institutions that receive Federal funds (such as museum, universities, state agencies and local governments) to “identify and report all Native American human remains and other cultural items that have been removed from Federal or tribal lands”.<sup>166</sup> These items were then to be repatriated or transferred to the appropriate Native American Tribe or Native Hawaiian organization. As this can be a very expensive undertaking per the law, the Secretary of the Interior administers “a grants program to assist museums and Indian Tribes in complying with certain requirements of the statute” and by Fiscal Year 2022, \$56 million has been awarded in grants.<sup>167</sup> These same institutions were to now protect and plan for what to do when Native American human remains and other cultural items are unexpectedly discovered on an archaeological survey or dig or anthropological expeditions and would be removed from Federal or tribal lands.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> Ibid.

<sup>164</sup> National Park Service, “Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979” <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/archeology/archaeological-resources-protection-act.htm> . Accessed on April 17, 2025.

<sup>165</sup> National Park Service, “Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990” <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/archeology/napgra.htm>. Accessed on April 17, 2025.

<sup>166</sup> National Park Service, “Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990” <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/archeology/napgra.htm>. Accessed on April 17, 2025.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid.

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## STATE OF IDAHO LEGISLATION

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### IDAHO STATUTES TITLE 18, CHAPTER 70, SECTION 35: DAMAGING CAVES OR CAVERNS UNLAWFULLY.

This statute makes it a misdemeanor to damage a cave or cavern or to remove any archaeological artifacts found within a cave or cavern without the permission of the owner..<sup>169</sup>

### IDAHO STATUTES TITLE 27, CHAPTER 5: PROTECTION OF GRAVES.

This statute prohibits the willful disturbance or destruction of human burial sites, prohibits possession of artifacts or human remains taken from a grave other than as authorized, and provides for professional archaeological excavation..<sup>170</sup>

### IDAHO STATUTES TITLE 31, CHAPTER 8: PROPERTY TAX LEVY

Idaho Statute 31-864 provides that counties may levy a tax of “not more than twelve one-thousandths percent (.012%) on each dollar of market value for assessment purposes of taxable property within the county” to fund historical societies historical museums, and historical restoration projects within the county that operate as Idaho non-profit corporations, as well as marking and development of historic sites operated by Idaho non-profit corporations..<sup>171</sup>

### IDAHO STATUTES TITLE 67, CHAPTER 41: STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Establishes the ISHS, provides for designation of historic sites, sets penalties for damage to archaeological or historical sites and requires permits for excavation of archaeological sites.

### IDAHO STATUTES TITLE 67, CHAPTER 46: PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC SITES.

Enacted in 1975, this statute defines historic preservation as “the research, protection, restoration and rehabilitation of buildings, structures, objects, districts, areas and sites significant in the history, architecture, archeology or culture of this state, its communities or the nation.”..<sup>172</sup>

The statute allows for the following:

- Creation of preservation commissions.
- Enumerates the powers and duties of commissions.
- Authorizes counties or cities to acquire historic properties.
- Authorizes counties or cities to create historic districts.
- Empowers local government to require a certificate of appropriateness for any proposed change to a structure within an historic district.
- Requires a certificate of appropriateness for any change in use of a structure or property within an historic district.
- Provides for appeals of commission decisions.
- Empowers local government to enact special restrictions to protect historic properties.
- Allows local governments to own historic easements.

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<sup>169</sup> State of Idaho, “Title 18 Crimes and Punishments”

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title18/T18CH70/SECT18-7035/> Accessed on April 17, 2025.

<sup>170</sup> State of Idaho, “Title 27 Cemeteries and Crematoriums”

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/title27/t27ch5/> Accessed on April 17, 2025.

<sup>171</sup> State of Idaho, “Title 31 Counties and County Law”

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title31/T31CH8/SECT31-864/> Accessed on April 17, 2025.

<sup>172</sup> State of Idaho, “Title 67 State Government and State Affairs”

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title67/T67CH46/SECT67-4602/> Accessed on April 17, 2025.

- Grants local government the authority to designate properties as historic, establishes a process for doing so, and allows for the process of changing the use of such properties.
- Authorizes local government to exempt historic properties from local building or health codes, or both, if deemed necessary to preserve them.
- Authorizes local governments to transfer development rights from designated historic properties.<sup>173</sup>

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## ADA COUNTY LEGISLATION

This Ada County Legislation portion of this Historic Preservation Plan has been copied verbatim from the Ada County 2007 Preservation Plan and updated or edited where appropriate.

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### ADA COUNTY CODE TITLE 8 CHAPTER 7, ARTICLE D: HISTORIC PRESERVATION

A chapter of the Ada County zoning code dealing with Historic Preservation and the duties and responsibilities of the Ada County Historic Preservation Council was enacted on August 25, 1988, as Ordinance 192. Originally codified as Title 8, Chapter 20, it was moved to Title 1, Chapter 10, Article A in 1999, and then it was moved to Title 8, Chapter 7, Article D in 2004. The ordinance has changed little since it was enacted, being closely modeled on the state enabling legislation.

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### ADA COUNTY CODE SPECIFIC HISTORIC PRESERVATION REGULATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

#### BUILDING REGULATIONS

The Ada County Building Division has accepted alternative means or methods of construction documented by any provision of any approved or adopted code. This includes ASTM STP 1258, as found in Preservation and Rehabilitation by Stephan J. Kelly, which provides alternative means of determining how older methods of construction can be calculated to meet current requirements.

#### ACC 7-2-2, EXCEPTIONS TO REGULATIONS

This provision exempts agricultural buildings from building permit review, as long as they are not used as a residence, as a place used by the public or as a place of employment where agricultural products are processed, treated, packaged, or sold.

#### ACC 7-2-3, ADOPTION OF CODES

This provision details building codes adopted by Ada County. This includes the 2018 International Building Code, supplemental accessibility requirements for qualified historic buildings and facilities.

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### ZONING REGULATIONS

#### ACC 8-1B-4E, NONCONFORMING USE

Ordinance 389, enacted on June 14, 2000, added this provision, which exempts properties listed on the National Register from the regulations of ACC 8-1B-4, Nonconforming Use. This would appear to allow any current or former use of a National Register listed property, even if the use is currently prohibited in the zone. It also allows nonconforming use to be expanded or extended and does not force the nonconforming use to become conforming if the use or a structure housing the use sustains damage that requires repairs that

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<sup>173</sup> State of Idaho, "Title 67 State Government and State Affairs"

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title67/T67CH46/SECT67-4602/> Accessed on April 17, 2025.



exceed more than 50 percent of its current assessed taxable value.

#### ACC 8-1B-5C, NONCONFORMING STRUCTURE

Ordinance 389, enacted on June 14, 2000, added this provision, which exempts structures listed on the National Register from the regulations of ACC 8-1B-5, Nonconforming Structure. This provision allows a nonconforming structure to be damaged by more than 75% of its assessed taxable value without it being forced to become conforming. The nonconformity of such structures generally relates to building setbacks (often reduced over time due to roadway widening), so this provision would allow a structure to be rebuilt within a setback (i.e. outside of the currently allowable buildable area) rather than requiring that any reconstruction conform to current setback requirements.

#### ACC 8-2E, PLANNED COMMUNITY DISTRICT

Each planned community allowed by Ada County creates its own development regulations, which include regulations written specifically for the planned community. Applications for planned communities require a study identifying historical and cultural resources on the site per ACC 8-8-6.

#### ACC 8-3C, SOUTHWEST OVERLAY DISTRICT

This district requires that streams be left in a natural state. A 30-foot setback from the high-water line of the stream is required for new subdivisions (per ACC 8-6A-7A). The only crossings allowed are for road or utility crossings. Stream corridors are important areas for learning about Native American cultures, as they were sites for hunting, fishing, and other uses.

Because the streams are left in a natural state with a 30-foot buffer, site archaeology should remain intact. And any crossings that require a Federal permit would require a NHPA Section 106 review of historic and cultural resources prior to any construction.

#### ACC 8-3D, PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT

The purpose statement of this provision states that a planned unit development is an appropriate tool to protect historic resources. The planned unit development process allows for the clustering of uses and relaxation of development standards in order to achieve the Planned Unit Development's purposes.

#### ACC 8-3G, BOISE RIVER GREENWAY OVERLAY DISTRICT

This district acts in much the same way as ACC 8-3C to preserve archaeological sites. It differs in that a 100-foot setback from the Boise River floodway is required for all fences and structures, providing additional protection to possible archaeological sites.

#### ACC 8-4J, DEDICATED OPEN SPACE STANDARDS

This provision lists "use associated with an historic structure" as being compatible within a dedicated open space area.

#### ACC 8-4E, MASTER SITE PLAN

#### ACC 8-4E-4D NATURAL FEATURES ANALYSIS

Item 6 of this provision requires an analysis of existing historic resources "as identified on the Ada County historic resources inventory."

#### ACC 8-4E-4I, HISTORIC FEATURES

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This requires that site development “conserve identified historic features” to the greatest extent possible. No other Ada County Code provision imposes this requirement.

#### ACC 8-6-3D, NATURAL FEATURES ANALYSIS

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As under a master site plan, item 6 of this provision requires an analysis of existing historic resources “as identified on the Ada County historic resources inventory.”

#### ACC 8-6A-7, DESIGN STANDARDS, WATERCOURSES

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Watercourses, which by definition include a natural or man-made channel or conveyance system for carrying water, require a 30-foot structural setback from the normal high-water line. This helps prevent negative impacts to historic canals and to natural creeks and rivers that were potentially used by Native Americans.

#### ACC 8-21A, HIDDEN SPRINGS

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The regulations for Hidden Springs are found at ACC 8-21A. They identify three resources that were recorded as part of studies commissioned by the Council in 1989 and 1991. The specific plan contains general statements regarding the preservation of the 130+ year old farmstead. In 2006, the County obtained title to the historic Schick-Ostolasa Farmstead property. The site is managed and maintained by the Dry Creek Historical Society.

#### INTEGRATION WITH LAND USE DECISIONS

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Ada County is the reviewing authority for development proposals within unincorporated portions of Ada County, while within incorporated areas the individual municipalities have responsibility. The previous sections provided an overview of Ada County’s authority in regulating development as it relates to historic preservation. This section is an overview of how and when the development review process under the County’s jurisdiction considers impacts to historic properties. Any required Federal or State review would be in addition to what is discussed here.

There are generally three levels of development review under the Ada County Code, as allowed under Idaho statutes Title 67, Chapter 65.

1. **Zoning Certificate Review:** Principally permitted uses, such as single-family dwellings, that do not require a master site plan require only a zoning certificate to assure that the use is allowed within the applicable zoning district, that the property is eligible for a building permit, the proposal complies with applicable overlay districts and the proposed development complies with applicable dimensional standards (buildings setbacks, lot size and required street frontage). No public input is required in this process.
2. **Administrative Level Review:** Other more common and smaller scale development proposals require administrative review. Most of these projects also seek the input of the public and affected public agencies, but no public hearing is required. A detailed report is compiled to document compliance with all applicable provisions of the Ada County Code and other relevant regulations. It is possible to condition the approval to mitigate potential development impacts.
3. **Hearing Level Review.** This category of development proposals requires public review and allows the County to place conditions on the development to mitigate potential development impacts. Such reviews seek input from the public and affected public agencies and require notice to the public and a public hearing. Comprehensive plan amendments, rezones, and plats require a recommendation from the Planning and Zoning Commission before a decision is reached by the Board. All other processes go directly to the decision-making body, which is either the Planning and Zoning

Commission or the Board of Ada County Commissioners, as specified in the Ada County Code.

## PUBLIC SECTOR INVOLVEMENT

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Ada County feels that it is important to encourage the preservation of the County's historic legacy by preserving historic sites and resources, educating the public on the importance of historic preservation, acknowledging individuals and groups who are preserving the County's historic legacy, and exploring incentives to encourage property owners to maintain and retain historic structures on their properties.

## PUBLIC OWNERSHIP OF HISTORIC SITES

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Ada County owns or manages the following structures and sites of historic significance:

- Barber Park is located adjacent to a portion of Barber Mill Site, an important sawmill and wood products production facility on the Boise River east of Boise. It is also near the headgate for the Ridenbaugh Canal.
- Hubbard Reservoir Recreation Area. Located 12 miles southwest of Boise is Hubbard Dam (1902) that is owned by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation as part of the Boise Project. It is significant in the story of irrigation and the development of rural Ada County. Ada County manages the 450-acre reservoir area for the Idaho Department of Lands where the earthen fill dam is located.
- Oregon Trail Recreation Area. Located along highway 21 are the "best preserved Oregon Trail ruts in Boise, the Kelton Trail, and a great overlook of the Barber Pool area, the Diversion Dam, and Downtown Boise."<sup>174</sup> This recreation area consists of the Oregon Trail & Kelton Freight Trail Ruts and 4.5 miles of hiking trails with kiosks describing the history of the trails and area.
- Although no longer owned by Ada County, the old Ada County Courthouse (1938-1939) was owned and used by Ada County until 2002, when the current courthouse opened. The building is now owned by the State of Idaho. The PWA Art Deco designed building was listed on the National Register in 1974.<sup>175</sup> To raise awareness of the importance of saving this building, the County funded a history of the courthouse, the result of which is a book entitled *Echoes from the Ada County Courthouse, 1938-2001* by Arthur A. Hart.
- The Schick-Ostolasa Farmstead property is in the Dry Creek Valley adjacent to Hidden Springs. The site is maintained and managed by the Dry Creek Historical Society.

## STAFFING

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The Ada County Development Services Department provides staff support for the Ada County Historic Preservation Council, which assists the Council in their activities.

## FUNDING

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The Ada County Historic Preservation Council is supported by Ada County and has an annual budget to support its activities. Also, as a CLG, Ada County is eligible to apply for and receive grants for various projects.

## CLG GRANTS

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Since the Council's inception in 1988, the Council has been awarded CLG grant funds for several projects. These projects have been used to identify and evaluate historic resources in Ada County as well as educate the public on the importance of historic preservation in Ada County.

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<sup>174</sup> Ada County, "Oregon Trail Recreation Area" <https://adacounty.id.gov/parksandwaterways/open-space-and-trails/oregon-trail-recreation-area/> Accessed on January 23, 2025.

<sup>175</sup> Idaho Architecture Project, "Old Ada County Courthouse"

<https://www.idahoarchitectureproject.org/properties/old-ada-county-courthouse/> Accessed on January 23, 2025.

## HISTORIC RESOURCE SURVEYS

1991 Star Historic District Feasibility Study

1992 Boise Survey of Historic Resources

1995 Dry Creek Study

1998 Ada County Historic Sites Inventory Study

2000 Ada County Historic Sites Inventory Study

2008 Ada County Historic Sites Inventory Study

2014 Grange Halls Survey

2018 Oregon Trail Survey in Eastern Ada County

2020 Rural Kuna Historic Sites Inventory

2022 Garden City State Street Survey

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION NETWORK

The Preservation Groups and Agencies portion of the Historic Preservation Plan for Ada County has been copied verbatim from the Ada County 2007 Preservation Plan and updated or edited or amended where appropriate.

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### ADA COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION GROUPS

#### ***Boise City Historic Preservation Commission***

Established April 19, 1976, their purpose is to engage in a comprehensive program of historic preservation to promote, preserve and protect historic buildings, structures, sites, monuments, streets, squares and neighborhoods which serve as visible reminders of the historical, archaeological, architectural, educational and cultural heritage of the City. The bulk of their Commission and staff time is presently devoted to administering the local historic districts within the City.

#### ***Eagle Historic Preservation Commission***

Organized in 1989, the five member Eagle Historic Preservation Commission seeks to preserve Eagle's heritage and shape its future. It oversees the operations of the Eagle Historical Museum and reviews proposed redevelopment of historic properties in Eagle.

#### ***Meridian Historic Preservation Commission***

This seven-member commission was formed on November 3, 1986, under Meridian's ordinance #471. The group has been steadily surveying historic properties in Meridian over time and has been sponsoring the listing of properties in the National Register.

#### ***Historical Societies***

Ada County has several historical societies that can be sources of information about a building or structure that you own and want to preserve. They are generally set up as non-profit corporations in order to accept donations of

cash or artifacts to further the specific mission of the organization of a museum with some having an educational focus.

### ***Basque Museum and Cultural Center***

Basque immigrants have played a significant role in the development of Ada County, with many first coming to this country to herd sheep in remote parts of Ada County and beyond. They have established a museum and cultural center in the Basque Block in downtown Boise to preserve and promote Basque history and culture.

### ***Dry Creek Historical Society***

This group was established in October 2005 with the initial purpose of preserving the Schick-Ostolasa Farmstead at Hidden Springs. Their current focus is to contribute to the preservation of the agricultural history in the Dry Creek Valley and to preserve and support the Schick-Ostolasa Farmstead. They have established the farmstead as an agricultural history learning center through exhibits, school programs, living history events, site tours, and educational speakers.

### ***Eagle Museum of History and Preservation***

The Eagle Museum of History and Preservation opened in October 2001, and was initially staffed by volunteers, but today is overseen by a Museum Curator and is managed by the City of Eagle. Exhibits focus on the growth and development of Eagle since the late 1880s, and they also maintain an archive of historic photographs and other small, specialized collections. The Eagle Museum of History and Preservation is located at 660 E. Civic Lane.

### ***Kuna Historical Society***

The Kuna Historical Society works to preserve Kuna's history. In the past they have worked with the Council to produce a walking tour of Kuna's history. The group also has participated in Kuna Days with the Council to help raise awareness of the County's heritage to the people in and around Kuna.

### ***Meridian Historical Society (former)***

Founded in 2002 this organization had focused on capturing the history of Meridian. They wrote a history on Meridian, produced a walking tour and wrote regular history columns for local newspapers. This group was a good resource for the Council. In 2021 the care of the Meridian History Center collection was transferred to the Meridian Library District. The Meridian History Center is housed in the Meridian City Hall.<sup>176</sup>

### ***Western Heritage Foundation***

Founded July 28, 2000. A non-profit corporation established to preserve for future generations the heritage of Idaho's frontier legacy. Its primary focus was on establishing the Western Heritage Historic Byway, Routes 69 and 78. The Foundation today produces documentaries about Idaho's past and provides historical experiences.<sup>177</sup>

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<sup>176</sup> Museum Database, "Meridian Historical Society Inc" <https://museumsdatabase.com/museums/view/8313> Accessed on April 15, 2025; Meridian Library District, "Meridian History Center" <https://www.mld.org/resources/history> Accessed on April 15, 2025.

<sup>177</sup> Facebook, "Western Heritage Foundation" <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61565553501782> Accessed on April 9, 2025.



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## STATE AND REGIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION GROUPS

### **Idaho Heritage Trust**

The Trust was founded in 1989 as a lasting legacy of the Centennial Committee, which was assembled to celebrate Idaho's centennial in 1990. Funds generated by sales of Idaho's red, white and blue standard license plates support historic preservation throughout Idaho, with fifty cents from each standard plate going into an endowment fund. The interest from the fund, in partnership with money from the local community, supports historic buildings, sites and artifact collections throughout Idaho. The Trust prefers to fund projects with public ownership or with plans for long-term ownership. The maximum grant is usually \$10,000. They provide technical assistance and up to a 50% match for "hard dollar costs."<sup>178</sup>

### **Idaho Military Historical Society**

The Idaho Military Historical Society was formed in 1993 to provide for the preservation, display, and interpretation of military history and artifacts that have a geographical, cultural or historical tie to the history of the people and state of Idaho. The group maintains the Idaho Military History Museum at Gowen Field in Boise.

### **Idaho Oregon-California Trail Association**

The Oregon-California Trails Association, founded in 1982, is a not-for-profit organization, headquartered in Independence, Missouri, dedicated to education about and preservation and enjoyment of the trans-Mississippi emigrant trails. The Idaho chapter is significant in that there are more surviving trail ruts in Idaho than in any other state. See <https://www.idahoocta.org/> for more information.

### **Idaho State Historical Society**

Established in 1907, the ISHS's mission is to educate through the identification, preservation, and interpretation of Idaho's cultural heritage. The ISHS is responsible for the Idaho History Center (public archives and research library), Idaho Oral History Center, Idaho State Museum at Julia Davis Park, the State Historic Preservation Office, and the Old Penitentiary.

The ISHS also partners with the U.S. Department of Agriculture/Idaho Department of Agriculture for the Century Farm and Ranch Program. Since 1990, over 450 farms and ranches have been designated Idaho Century Farms or Ranches which have been farmed or ranched for at least 100 years ago on the same 40 acres or more. This designation recognizes "the importance and extraordinary contributions of Idaho's farming and ranching pioneers."<sup>179</sup>

### **Idaho State Historic Preservation Office**

The SHPO was established in 1972 as a division of the Idaho State Historical Society. It manages a variety of programs including the National Register, historic tax credits, compliance (NHPA Section 106), and the CLG program. The CLG programs administers annual grants focusing on a range of projects including survey, designation, planning documents, and brick and mortar to name only a few. "In recent years, the Idaho SHPO has

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<sup>178</sup> Idaho Heritage Trust. <https://www.idahoheritagetrust.org/> Accessed on April 9, 2025.

<sup>179</sup> Idaho State Historical Society, "Century Farm and Ranch Program" <https://history.idaho.gov/century-farm/> Accessed on March 13, 2025.

distributed over \$100,000 annually to CLGs. Because of the CLG program, over \$2 million dollars have been injected directly into local communities since 1983.”<sup>180</sup>

## Preservation Idaho

Founded in 1972, as the Idaho Historic Preservation Council, Preservation Idaho is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving the state's historic and cultural resources through education and advocacy. They are unique among preservation groups in Idaho as they receive no public funding to support their efforts. They sponsor the annual “Orchids and Onions” award program to recognize the historic preservation successes and misdeeds of groups and individuals around the state. The group also provides workshops, tours, and maintains a list of endangered historic sites.<sup>181</sup>

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## NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

The National Park Service (NPS) is a Federal Agency that is solely tasked with carrying “out historic preservation both within in and outside of the National Park System.”<sup>182</sup> It has a multitude of responsibilities besides just working on the preservation of history in the parks:

- Works with partners (State, Territorial, Tribal, and Federal Historic Preservation Officers) to identify, nominate, and recognize historic properties for listing in the National Register.
- Managing grant programs such as Save America’s Treasures. The Save America’s Treasures grant program, established in 1998, provides from \$25,000 up to \$750,000 for preservation and/or conservation work on threatened nationally significant historic buildings, structures and sites along with nationally significant collections (artifacts, museum collections, documents, sculptures and other works of art).<sup>183</sup>
- Conducts and sponsors research in historic preservation under the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training and developing preservation briefs.
- Oversees Heritage Documentation Programs: HABS, HAER, HALS.
- Works with National Heritage Areas.<sup>184</sup>
- Administers the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives Program in partnership with the Internal Revenue Service and the local State Historic Preservation Offices. This program “provides a 20 percent Federal tax credit to property owners who undertake a substantial rehabilitation of a historic building for commercial or income-producing use while maintaining its historic character.”<sup>185</sup> Since its inception it has assisted with 49,000 completed rehabilitation projects, leveraged over \$235 billion in private investment created over 3.2 million jobs while benefiting the national economy with “\$503.8 billion in output, \$251.6

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<sup>180</sup> Idaho State Historical Society, “Certified Local Government” <https://history.idaho.gov/clg/> Accessed on April 9, 2025; Alexis Matrone, personal communication, June 27, 2025.

<sup>181</sup> Preservation Idaho, <https://www.preservationidaho.org/> Accessed on March 13, 2025.

<sup>182</sup> National Park Service, “What is Historic Preservation?” <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/historicpreservation/what-is-historic-preservation.htm> Accessed on April 28, 2025.

<sup>183</sup> National Park Service, “Save America’s Treasures Grants” <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/historicpreservationfund/save-americas-treasures-grants.htm> and [https://www.nps.gov/subjects/historicpreservationfund/upload/SAT\\_24\\_041524\\_508.pdf](https://www.nps.gov/subjects/historicpreservationfund/upload/SAT_24_041524_508.pdf) Save America’s Treasures Fact Sheet, NPS, 2024 accessed on April 29, 2025.

<sup>184</sup> National Park Service, “What is Historic Preservation?” <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/historicpreservation/what-is-historic-preservation.htm> Accessed on April 28, 2025.

<sup>185</sup> National Park Service, “8 Things You Might Not Know About the Federal Historic Tax Credit” <https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/8-things-you-might-not-know-about-the-federal-historic-tax-credit.htm> Accessed on April 30, 2025.

billion in gross domestic product (GDP), \$185.1 billion in private income, and \$71.3 billion in tax revenue”<sup>186</sup>

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## NATIONAL PRESERVATION GROUPS

These are a few of the national preservation groups that can assist private, public, and 501(3)(c) organizations in preservation of their historic site, building or structure and community. They also provide educational, research resources and/or technical expertise for all Americans.

### The 1772 Foundation

The 1772 Foundation’s purpose is to preserve and enhance historic sites related to farming, industrial development, transportation or unusual historic buildings. Grants are awarded for Historic Property Redevelopment Programs, African American History, and Dynamic Preservation. Grants can range from as little at \$10,000 to as much as \$250,000, but the applicant must be a 501(3)(c) organization.<sup>187</sup>

### National Alliance of Preservation Commissions

Founded in 1983, the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, was formed in response to amendments to the NHPA of 1966. In 1983, the NHPA was amended to provide financial assistance to local governments who met the requirements of the newly added CLG program. A CLG required the establishment of a local preservation ordinance and a commission. The role of the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions is “to provide a forum for commissions to discuss mutual problems and to serve as a national voice representing the particular needs of commissions.”<sup>188</sup> In addition, today they do education and training for those on CLG historic preservation commissions.<sup>189</sup>

### National Trust for Historic Preservation

The National Trust for Historic Preservation (National Trust) was founded long before the NHPA in 1949 to provide leadership, education, advocacy, and resources to protect the irreplaceable places that tell America’s story. The National Trust’s national grant programs include:

- National Preservation Funds - \$500 to \$5,000 for initiation of preservation projects.
- Johanna Favrot Fund for Historic Preservation - \$2,500 to \$15,000 – for projects that contribute to the preservation or recapture of an authentic sense of place.
- Cynthia Woods Mitchell Fund for Historic Interiors - \$2,500 to \$15,000 to assist in the preservation, restoration, and interpretation of historic interiors.
- Hart Family Fund for Small Towns - \$2,500 to \$15,000 to provide seed money for preservation projects in small towns with a population of 10,000 or less.
- African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund - \$50,000 to \$150,000 to “advance ongoing preservation activities for historic places such as sites, museums, and landscapes representing African American cultural heritage.”
- Backing Historic Small Restaurants – \$50,000 to help historic small restaurants address critical

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<sup>186</sup> Ibid.

<sup>187</sup> The 1772 Foundation, “About” <https://www.1772foundation.org/about>; The 1772 Foundation, “Grants Information” <https://www.1772foundation.org/grants>; The 1772 Foundation, “2025 Historic Properties Redevelopment Programs” <https://www.1772foundation.org/hprp2025> all accessed on April 9, 2025.

<sup>188</sup> National Alliance of Preservation Commissions, “Who We Are” <https://www.napcommissions.org/who-we-are> accessed on April 9, 2025.

<sup>189</sup> National Alliance, “The Alliance Review” <https://www.napcommissions.org/alliance-review> and “Forum” <https://www.napcommissions.org/forum-2024> Accessed on April 9, 2025.

needs in partnership with American Express.

- National Fund for Sacred Places – \$50,000 to \$500,000 for congregations of all faiths for training, planning and capital grants in partnership with Partners for Sacred Places.

There are many other grant programs they have for different parts of the U.S. outside of Idaho. The National Trust also provides technical and educational services to the greater preservation community and sponsors the annual National Preservation Awards. The National Trust also manages 27 historic sites that they own all across the Nation..<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>190</sup> National Trust for Historic Preservation, “Grant Programs” <https://savingplaces.org/grants>. Accessed on April 30, 2025; National Trust for Historic Preservation, “Historic Sites” <https://savingplaces.org/historic-sites>. Accessed on April 30, 2025.