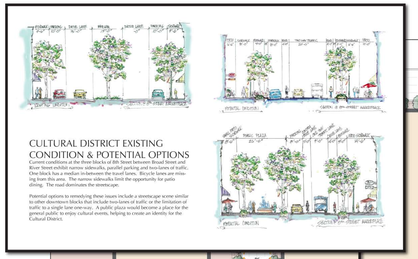
THE CULTURAL DISTRICT | 8TH STREET MARKETPLACE | THE GROVE PLAZA | CENTRAL DOWNTOWN & THE CAPITOL DISTRICT



## CULTURAL DISTRICT EXISTING CONDITION & POTENTIAL OPTIONS

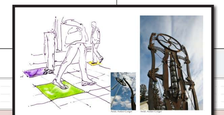
Current conditions at the three blocks of Broad Street between River Street exhibit narrow sidewalks, parallel parking and two-lanes of traffic. One block has a median in between the travel lanes. Bicycle lanes are missing from this area. The narrow sidewalks limit the opportunity for patio dining. The road dominates the streetscape.

Potential options to remodeling these issues include a streetscape scene similar to other downtown blocks that include two-lanes of traffic or the limitation of traffic to a single lane one-way. A public plaza would become a place for the general public to enjoy cultural events, helping to create an identity for the Cultural District.



## CULTURAL DISTRICT PLAZA

The three blocks of 8th Street between Broad Street and River Street are an opportunity to create a public plaza for the Cultural District. Closing the street would allow for the Cultural District, a plaza available for outdoor events. A 24-foot wide plaza can be accommodated by limiting the traffic to a single one-way lane, parking on one side and two bicycle lanes. The bicycle lanes are inclusive of one lane to travel with traffic and a contra-lane that allows bicyclers to travel against traffic. Sidewalks are designed to allow for compact patio dining. Bioswales introduce vegetation to the streetscape. The space may also include: water features, unique paving designs, artist designed street furniture and art installations.



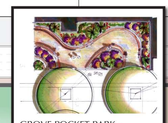
## GREENING THE GROVE THROUGH INTERACTIVE GREEN ART

The concept of "Greening the Grove" has evolved from a singular public art piece into a collaboration of multiple local organizations working together to introduce green sustainable art elements to the 8th Street corridor. It is a public art concept for downtown Boise that embodies alternative energy and a "green" focus. Selected artists will be asked to create interactive pieces that will be powered by alternative energies that are might include: solar, wind, water or kinetics. Art elements designed by local artists will speak to alternative energy through design and function. The art elements may function in an interactive method with pedestrians. The art may incorporate kinetic pavers made of local recycled glass that glow when stepped on or wind/gyro spinners that are powered by pedestrian movement. Other ideas include: wind turbines integrated in the art could collect energy from the sun to power a kiosk that provides information to pedestrians. The concept of "Greening the Grove" would extend along the spine of 8th Street by connecting nodes, which would improve wayfinding and create a sense of place.

## GREEN ROOFS AT PUBLIC PARKING GARAGES

Downtown rooftops provide an opportunity for the introduction of a green landscape in the sky. Public and private parking garages have an opportunity to introduce green landscape to the top levels of the parking structure. Green roofs have the potential to be used for a variety of purposes: as public green space or parks in the sky. Green roofs help to improve air quality, temperature regulation, provide areas for storm-water retention/reuse, preserve habitat and biodiversity, opportunity for local food production and an opportunity for expanded community spaces. The top floor of the parking garage at the Grove Plaza is an example of a space that stands to vegetated microclimates that give more than they take from the environment.

Downtown rooftops are also an opportunity to introduce wind power to the urban landscape. Wind turbines could be placed on the roof to take advantage of aerodynamics to harness wind distinct to the urban environment. This "free" energy could be used to reduce the demand on standard energy resources and reduce energy costs.



## GROVE POCKET PARK – GREENING THE GROVE

The existing patch of lawn presents the opportunity to create a small pocket park in the heart of downtown. The park would include the street planting beds that provide an inviting atmosphere for people to rest as they meander along 8th Street. Adjacent building walls that define the space could be used for the display of public art.

## LIVING WALL – GREENING THE GROVE

Imagine a vertical garden in the functions green organizations, schools and universities across the nation. A living wall is simple to install and easy to relocate if needed. Living walls can be a few feet high or can scale the entire facade of most of Boise's downtown buildings. The temporary wall surrounding the northwest corner of 8th and Main is a potential location for a living wall. Greening the Grove could be a living wall when the site is developed in the future. The facade of an existing building or a blank wall in a sunny alley way might be a potential canvas for a wall of lush vegetation.

## KIOSKS & WAYFINDING

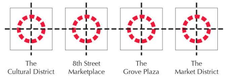
A kiosk is a wayfinding element available for public use. Wayfinding elements provide graphic and/or audible methods to convey location and directions to pedestrians. A series of kiosks along 8th Street can provide wayfinding information for pedestrians could potentially connect to art elements and incorporate other sustainable elements. Kiosks can be power sources integrated with the art could power electronic kiosks. Electronic kiosks could provide up-to-date accurate information regarding public events in downtown. Kiosks may also serve as an educational tool to provide real-time data on power usage and power generated by nearby alternative energy art installations.

## PEDESTRIAN SAFETY AT INTERSECTIONS & ART

The intersections along the 8th street corridor have different conditions that will require individual solutions for increasing pedestrian safety, way finding and traffic calming. The goal would be to have pedestrians safely traverse the 8th street corridor and for vehicular traffic to intersect this corridor at a reasonable speed and volume. Plan A and Plan B offer two different potential options. Plan A includes minimal changes to the street and sidewalk conditions while Plan B includes bulbouts or widening of sidewalks and raised curbs to help physical define pedestrian space and vehicular space. Through the integration of traffic calming, pedestrian safety improvements, and the installation of public art to create a safe path for pedestrians, an efficient path for vehicular traffic and an opportunity for art installations to begin to define places and nodes.

These elements may include:

- Bulbouts or widening of curbed bulbouts to reduce travel distance
- Defining crosswalks and intersections through change in texture and color
- Strategically located art installations
- Installation of pedestrian signals that countdown and/or incorporate countdown timers
- Reduced vehicular travel lane widths to slow traffic
- Change in road surface material to alert and slow vehicular traffic




## CONCEPT

The 8th Street Concept Plan is a basemap depicting potential opportunities along the 8th Street Corridor from State Street to The Boise River. These opportunities include: identity elements, wayfinding, public artwork, green energy, green space, pedestrian safety improvements, traffic calming, streetscape design, bicycle access and public space. Sketches depict suggested ideas to expand these opportunities to improve this vital corridor in the heart of downtown Boise.

The 8th Street corridor passes through and joins four distinct districts in downtown Boise. The center of each district is defined by a "node" created by the intersection of pedestrian and/or vehicular traffic. The nodes act as a nexus, points of energy from which the urban landscape emanates. In combination, the nodes and the districts that grow outward from them act as organizing elements for the creation of public, urban space. A pattern then emerges. When a unifying concept is overlaid on this pattern it can help create a sense of place and strengthens the downtown core.

## LEGEND

- Bus Lane
- Potential Streetcar Route
- Bicycle Lane
- Bicycle Parking
- New Crosswalk
- Gateway to Capital City Public Market
- Existing Public Artwork
- Major Nodes

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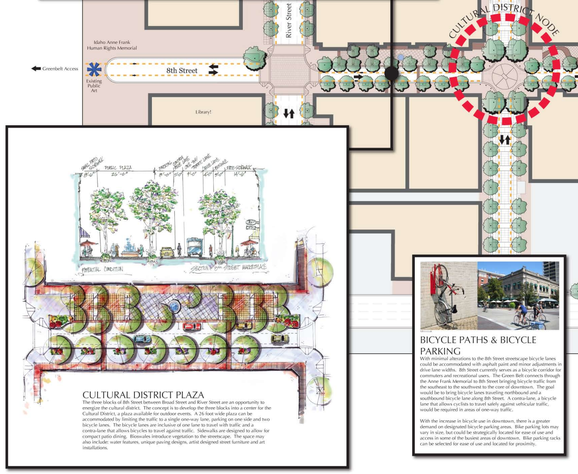




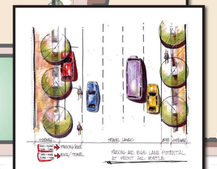
## BICYCLE PATHS & BICYCLE PARKING

With minimal alterations to the 8th Street streetscape bicycle lanes can be accommodated without the amplification of the asphalt surface. Given a drive lane width, 8th Street currently serves as a bicycle corridor for commuters and recreational users. The Green Belt connects through the Anne Frank Memorial to 8th Street bringing bicycle traffic from the southeast to the southwest to the core of downtown. The goal of the Cultural District Plaza is to accommodate bicycles southbound bicycle lane along 8th Street. A contra-lane, a bicycle lane that allows cyclists to travel safely against vehicular traffic, would be required in areas of one-way traffic.

With the increase in bicycle use in downtown, there is a greater demand on designated bicycle parking areas. Bike parking lots may vary in size, but could be strategically located for ease of use and access in some of the busiest areas of downtown. Bike parking racks can be selected for ease of use and located for proximity.

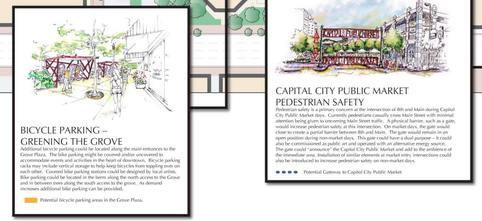
## BIOSWALE

Landscaping design to remove pollution and silt from surface water runoff before entering the drainage system, groundwater or river. An urban bioswale may be built into the sidewalk as a recessed garden for plants. Drains are cut into the curb and covered with metal grates to allow pedestrians to walk over. This addition of vegetations softens the mass of concrete and asphalt common in an urban environment.



## PARKING & BICYCLE LANE POTENTIAL AT FRONT & MYRTLE

The focus area is traffic that define Front Street and Myrtle Street create barriers to the flow of pedestrian traffic on 8th Street due to the volume and speed of vehicles. Front and Myrtle Street are one-way streets that are underutilized except during peak travel hours with the addition of a full-time bike lane and parking during off-peak hours could be implemented. For example, five lanes could be dedicated to vehicular traffic from 7am to 9am and 5pm to 7pm. During the time of non-peak traffic volume, parallel parking would be allowed and vehicular traffic would be reduced to four lanes, two lanes in each direction. The new bicycle lanes are accommodated by narrowing the current width of each traffic lane. Narrower traffic lanes have a tendency to slow vehicular traffic thus increasing pedestrian safety. Roadside parking during non-peak traffic hours improves pedestrian safety at adjacent sidewalks. This opportunity to increase pedestrian safety can be accommodated cosmetically by repainting the pavement markings and installing signage.



## BICYCLE PARKING – GREENING THE GROVE

Additional bicycle parking could be located along the main entrances to the Grove Plaza. The bike parking might be covered and/or uncovered to accommodate different needs of the users. Bicycle racks that allow for parking racks may include vertical storage to help keep bicycles from toppling over on each other. Covered bike parking stations could be designed by local artists. Bike parking could be located in the berm along the north access to the Grove and in between trees along the south access to the grove. As demand increases additional bike parking can be provided.

Potential bicycle parking areas in the Grove Plaza.

## CAPITAL CITY PUBLIC MARKET PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

Pedestrian safety is a primary concern at the intersection of 8th and Main during Capital City Public Market days. Currently pedestrians casually cross Main Street with minimal attention being given to oncoming Main Street traffic. A physical barrier, such as a gate would increase pedestrian safety at this intersection. On market days, the gate would be closed to vehicular traffic allowing the Capital City Public Market to create an open pavilion during non-market days. This gate could have a dual purpose – it could also be commissioned as public art and operated with an alternative energy source. The gate could "announce" the Capital City Public Market and add to the ambience of the immediate area. Installation of similar elements at market entry intersections could also be introduced to increase pedestrian safety on non-market days.

Potential Gateway to Capital City Public Market

## POST OFFICE PLAZA

The sidewalk frontage at the downtown post office provides an opportunity for a public plaza space. Transforming a sidewalk into a public plaza would allow for the integration of public art, landscaping elements, encourage people to use it as a place to meet and relax. Water elements help to cool the space on hot summer days and may be designed as a place for children to play. Vegetation provides texture, color and shade. Variation in paving pattern and materials adds interest to the space. An art installation may act as a focal point of the plaza.

8TH STREET CONCEPT PLAN
Boise, Idaho 2010

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