

# Barber Valley Neighborhood Access Review

October 2019



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Pedestrian alley crossing missing a truncated dome (Inventory #5)

“This is not a mere inconvenience; we all need to increase our access awareness and take an active role in creating barrier-free communities.”

—Erik Kingston, Community Advocate

“When I decided to move to east Boise, I actually looked at several newly developing areas. The first builder indicated due to the slope of the area, it would be difficult to build with no stairs, and a ramp would be quite long. They could really only figure out one entrance that would be accessible and the others would have steps. For safety reasons, I like to have at least two exits that are accessible.

The second development was advertising lots that were very reasonable. When my realtor contacted the builder, they indicated that the lots were intended for multi-level homes, not single level homes. My realtor went to the City to inquire, but the only solution offered was to build a single level home on the lot. I never inquired about having two lots as I would not have been able to afford to pay for both.

I ultimately bought a house and made major renovations. There are only a handful of home in my subdivision that I can actually get to my neighbors’ door to knock on it. If I need something from my neighbors, I send my son. I really do not understand the need for multi-tiered steps going into homes.”

—Jane Donnellan, Spring Creek resident



## Introduction

From April to October 2019, the Idaho Access Project (IAP) conducted a Neighborhood Access Review to evaluate the accessibility of Barber Valley through the lens of various disabilities. The project's geographic scope included everything between the Boise River and foothills, from the Parkcenter Bridge by Bown Crossing to the intersection of Warm Springs and Highway 21.

Over a seven-month period, project participants reviewed planning documents, listened to residents, business owners, and agency staff, and conducted walk reviews across the entire Barber Valley geographic area.

The project had a specific focus on:

- Barriers to Barber Valley amenities that may limit the experience or quality of life for people with disabilities

- Opportunities to incorporate emerging accessible design features and technology into future developments, including parks and trails, business districts, and education and cultural resources
- Partnerships between the private and public sectors to align plans and resources

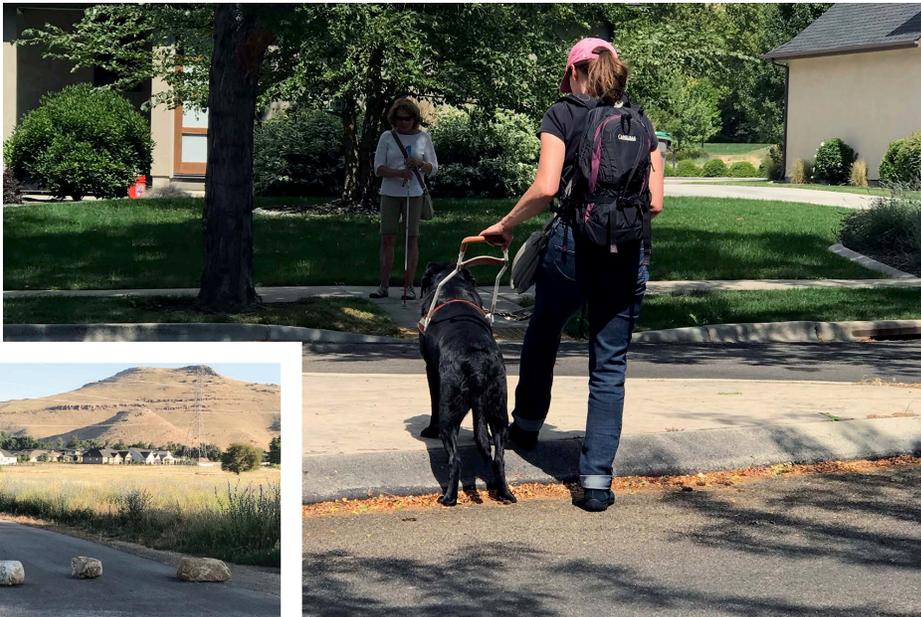
The findings and recommendations are intended to improve accessibility in Barber Valley, and to also provide guidance on how future neighborhoods can be designed and built in more inclusive ways.

Ultimately, we hope to set our city on a course for a visionary future where universal design and emerging technology is the norm, not the exception, enhancing the quality of life for people with disabilities.

## Report Format & Limitations

Our hope is that this report is accessible and easy to read for everyone. We tried to stick to plain language and avoid a lot of complicated and technical information. Our intent is that someone with no experience in planning or disabilities can understand what we're trying to accomplish.

This report has its limitations, and it is important to recognize them. More work must be done to learn from people with cognitive, intellectual and hearing disabilities. This report is heavily focused on recommendations from individuals with physical and vision-related disabilities because that is who volunteered to participate in the project. This report is the beginning of a conversation, not the end, and it should be used to develop better outreach and engagement efforts to ensure all disabilities are represented.



(Inventory #10)



(Inventory 50)



(Inventory #3)

## Disability and Neighborhoods

Disability impacts all of us. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1 in 5 adults have a disability. Disability rates are even higher among people 65 years of age and older — our fastest growing population. The Idaho Access Project (IAP) envisions a future where people with disabilities have equal access to live, play, and work alongside our friends, family, and neighbors. This vision will be accomplished by working at the neighborhood-level, developing strong partnerships with the private and public sectors, and advancing a vision and projects that change our neighborhoods for the better.

An accessible and livable neighborhood includes people with disabilities in civic, social, cultural, educational, and recreational activities. Safe, reliable, and accessible transportation, sidewalks, curb ramps, street crossings, and facilities designed on universal design principles are examples of basic neighborhood elements. Access issues are often thought of solely in terms of legal compliance, rather than evaluating the full experience of a person with a disability living, working, and recreating in a neighborhood.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) provides the minimum standards in creating accessible communities and is an important place to start when evaluating compliance. However, universal design principles go beyond the ADA and are broader concepts. The Center for Universal Design at North Carolina State University defines universal design as, "The design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design." Adjusting the environment to make it more accessible and inclusive is crucial, but it is only one part of making communities more livable for people with disabilities.

How do we design neighborhoods that include people with disabilities? The answer is simple. Include people with disabilities from day one. When designing neighborhoods, people with disabilities must be engaged at every stage in the planning and design process, from needs assessment to final design. As the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development recognizes, the goal is to integrate and plan for accessibility FIRST, before engineering, before design, before construction.

As a community, we must come together to ensure policies, codes and laws include people with disabilities. Neighborhoods are the heartbeat of any community. People of all abilities and ages have a civil right to live, play, and work in neighborhoods. When people with

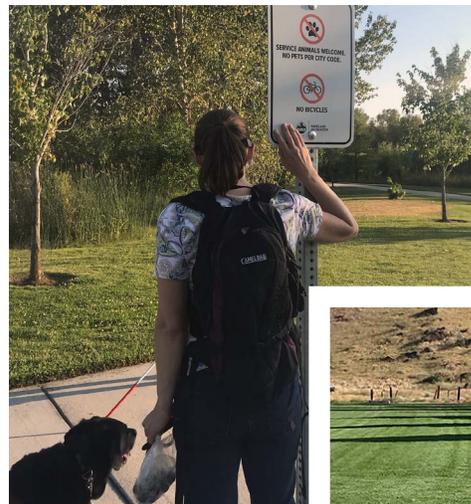
disabilities are designed out of neighborhoods, a city cannot be considered livable or healthy.

On July 26, 1990, at the signing of the ADA, President Bush made this statement of intent: "Together, we must remove the physical barriers we have created and the social barriers that we have accepted. For ours will never truly be a prosperous nation until all within it prosper."

The Idaho Access Project recognizes that there are multiple converging issues in the Treasure Valley, all impacting the quality of life of people with disabilities. Some of these issues include:

- Explosive growth in the housing sector with no plan to ensure homes and neighborhoods are accessible for people with disabilities
- Road, sidewalk, and curb ramp construction zones that were inaccessible, and in many instances, dangerous for people with disabilities
- Deployment of e-scooters on the streets and sidewalks of Boise and Meridian, creating countless barriers for people with disabilities
- Accidents and deaths involving people with disabilities attempting to navigate unsafe public rights-of-way

The Idaho Access Project recognizes the need for positive social change to address the inadequacies in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), but more important, to put forth a vision for a Boise that is truly accessible to everyone.



(Inventory #32)



(Inventory #39)

## Neighborhood Access Review

The Neighborhood Access Review (NAR) is a new and innovative approach developed by the IAP for systematically evaluating how livable and welcoming a neighborhood is for people with disabilities. What is it like to experience Barber Valley and everything that makes it a great place to live, work, and play if you are a person using a mobility device, have low vision or are blind, are deaf or hard of hearing, have a cognitive or intellectual disability, or a mental health condition? What works well, and what improvements can be made? These are the questions a neighborhood access review is meant to ask and answer, and hopefully to better inform current and future neighborhoods as we try to make Boise the most livable and accessible city in the country.

**This first NAR involved three areas phases:**

### *Phase I – Research*

To begin, we reviewed all the relevant planning documents for Barber Valley in order to identify specific references to disability. We also tested these documents for accessibility for people who are blind or low vision. Specific references to disability or accessibility were limited. We also conducted outreach to people who live, work, or play in Barber Valley and who have disabilities, or are connected to people with disabilities (family, friends, co-workers, etc.) A summary of these findings are provided in the report.

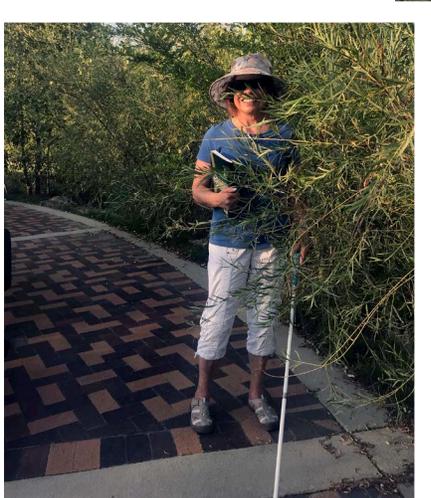
### *Phase II – Accessibility Reviews*

This phase involved taking groups of people with different abilities on “walk reviews” across Barber Valley, checking for accessibility of curb ramps and sidewalks, access to neighborhoods and businesses, and testing trails and roundabouts.

### *Phase III – Analysis*

The final phase involved compiling and reviewing the data we collected and developing recommendations for developers and builders, city and county agencies, and community organizations, such as neighborhood associations.

(Inventory #18)



(Inventory #27)



(Inventory #44)

## Steering Committee

While IAP staff coordinated the project, a steering committee was developed to act as a sounding board. Committee members represented Barber Valley residents with disabilities, business owners, and staff from various agencies. The Steering Committee formally convened three times, but certain members participated in the project at a deeper level.

## Community Outreach

In June 2019, we organized and conducted five outreach events to learn how people with disabilities experience living, working, or playing in Barber Valley. On June 17 and 22, we invited the community to Listening Sessions at East Junior High and the Mill District Clubhouse. Three focus groups were conducted for specific disability groups, including Deaf or Hard of Hearing (June 10), Mobility (June 18), and Blind or Low Vision (June 22). Licensed sign language interpreters were provided at both Listening Sessions and the focus group for Deaf or Hard of Hearing.

### Listening Sessions

At the two Listening Sessions, we did not have any community members attend. The licensed sign language interpreters who attended provided valuable insight about the Deaf or Hard of Hearing community that we had not considered. The ADA Coordinator for the City of Boise attended the Listening Session at East Junior High and we were able to have a productive conversation.

### Focus Groups

The mobility and vision focus groups were well attended. The focus group for deaf and hard of hearing was only attended by the two licensed sign language interpreters. Although we reached out to the Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and to specific people in the community, we were unsuccessful at getting participation. We recognize that there are many barriers for outreach with the Deaf or Hard of Hearing community. These include transportation, financial, language, and culture.



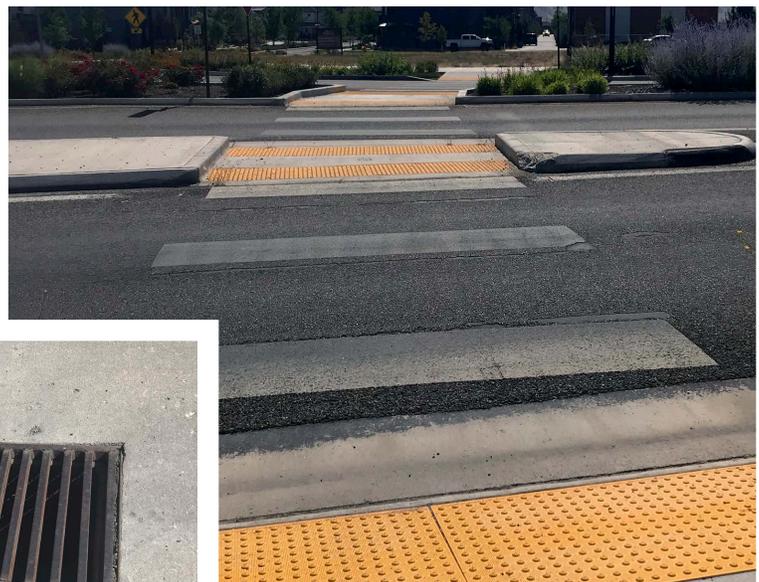
(Inventory #6)

“How do we design neighborhoods that include people with disabilities? The answer is simple. Include people with disabilities from day one.”

—Dana Gover, IAP Board Member

### What did we learn?

- Initial time and resources need to be directed at communicating about the barriers people with disabilities face daily in neighborhoods.
- Communicate the message that disability impacts all of us and participating is worthwhile.
- Assuming people would attend an open house event on a summer evening or Saturday morning was unrealistic; rather, we need to reach people at broader events or one-on-one where they are.
- Community outreach events can be expensive and labor intensive, and the strategy and purpose must be clear.
- Transportation and employment are significant barriers for many people with disabilities, limiting their ability to not only participate in this project but to even live, work, or play in Barber Valley.
- Parents of kids with disabilities are busy and have limited time to engage in a community event.
- Self-identifying as “disabled” is not a simple issue and may prevent people from participating in outreach events.



(Inventory #11)

## Review of Planning Documents

The following agency planning documents were reviewed to identify references specific to disability or accessibility related issues or topics. We also tested each document for accessibility for people who are blind or low-vision.

We reviewed these documents, in part, to demonstrate how little disability or accessibility are considered in the planning process, and the need for a more focused and intentional approach to addressing issues of accessibility in the design of our neighborhoods and broader community.

ENTITY	PLAN	DISABILITY REFERENCE
COMPASS	<b>Communities in Motion 2040 (2014)</b>	References the need for transit in an evacuation for people who are older or have disabilities (p. 135)
Valley Regional Transit	<b>ValleyConnect 2.0 (2018)</b>	References expanding the specialized transportation focus to include the general populations and general transportation rather than remaining limited to critical areas, including access to independence for seniors and persons with disabilities (p 38)
City of Boise	<b>BluePrint Boise (2018)</b>	References need to provide access to the arts for people with disability (p. 2-60), prevent discrimination in Fair Share Housing based on disability (2-38), encourage housing that is accessible or adaptable (p. 2-39), and a pedestrian network in the Central Bench Neighborhood that is accessible to all (CB-13)
City of Boise	<b>Transportation Action Plan (2016)</b>	References allocating funding for travel trainer and ambassador programs to provide one-on-one support for travelers with disabilities (p. 62), and guidelines for ensuring the public right-of-way is accessible (p. 83)
City of Boise	<b>Boise River Resource Master Plan (2014)</b>	References accessible access to Quinn's Pond (p. 23), boat rides for people with disabilities offered by volunteers who float the river and pickup trash (p. 26), and unpaved pathways that meet ADA width requirements (p. 61)
City of Boise	<b>Peace Valley Overlook Reserve Master Plan</b>	None
City of Boise	<b>Harris Ranch Specific Plan SP01 (2007)</b>	References push buttons actuation, audible signals, and tactile indicators for pedestrian crossings through roundabouts (Chapter 2, p. 28)
City of Boise	<b>Barber Valley Specific Plan SP02 (2007)</b>	None
City of Boise	<b>Interagency Foothills Management Plan (2015)</b>	References the challenges of creating accessible trails, examples of accessible trails, and the need to obtain a key from Ridges to Rivers staff to open gates to access accessible trails (p. 4-6)
City of Boise	<b>City of Boise Reserves Management Plan (2015)</b>	None
City of Boise	<b>Ridge to Rivers 10-Year Management Plan (2016)</b>	References need to improve the experience for trail users with disabilities (p. 29, 34, APPENDIX B)
ACHD	<b>Strategic Plan 2035 (2016)</b>	References the goal of bringing 100% of sidewalks and curb ramps into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act
ACHD	<b>ADA Transition Plan (2019)</b>	Newly adopted transition plan that includes completing an accessible push button inventory and diagonal curb ramp inventory, and filling two ADA related staff positions
Ada County	<b>Parks and Open Space Master Plan (2007)</b>	References the need to, "Provide accessible recreation opportunities for the disabled, handicapped, and other segments of the community with special needs in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act" (p. 4-10, 4-14)
Ada County	<b>Open Space Advisory Task Force: Findings and Recommendations</b>	None

# Findings

The Findings section provides the following information:

## POSITIVE OBSERVATIONS

This includes features or elements in Barber Valley that are done well, such as curb ramps or access to community programs.

## INVENTORY

The Appendix includes a complete inventory of barriers, The inventory provides detailed information on specific barriers impacting people with disabilities discovered during the research and walk-audit phases of the project. The “owner” of the barriers (such as the city or a builder) is also identified.

## FINDINGS SUMMARY

Here we consolidate what we found in the inventory into broader categories or themes.

## Positive Observations

The following highlights positive examples of features, investment, and action around accessibility in Barber Valley:

- A visionary developer and staff that supports accessibility
- Curbs and sidewalks in certain new subdivisions were expertly built
- The staff at the Coffee Mill embrace people with disabilities
- The Idaho Shakespeare Festival’s accessible program for the deaf or hard of hearing community
- The parks and Greenbelt provide access to recreation and nature
- Water features in Marianne Williams Park provide audible cues for people who are blind or low vision which can help with orientation
- Requests to modify guide dog signage in the parks during this project was met with immediate and positive action by the City of Boise

## Inventory

INVENTORY						
#	Issue	Description	Recommendation	Location	Disability	Responsible Entity
ADA COUNTY HIGHWAY DISTRICT						
1	<b>Roundabouts Difficult to Navigate</b>	Crossing through roundabouts can be difficult and unsafe for pedestrians who are blind or low vision, aging, mobility, or individuals of short stature.	Include audible, visual, and tactile crossing queues to create a safe crossing environment. As roundabouts become more popular in Ada County, it is imperative to maintain the ability of pedestrians who are blind, or other disabilities to travel independently with the goal of a safe and practical crossing at roundabouts. Accessible roundabouts must be viewed as a travel demand management technique for state and local government.	General Roundabouts	Everyone	ACHD

**INVENTORY**

#	Issue	Description	Recommendation	Location	Disability	Responsible Entity
2	<b>RRFB pedestrian-activated flashing crossing signal</b>	At the crossing there is a RRFB pedestrian activated flasher. The signal button is located too far back from the curb. The button is located behind the pathway requiring pedestrians who are blind or low vision attempting to cross the street to walk off the path into traffic. There is no audible sound to alert a pedestrian who is blind or low vision that the signal is flashing and it is safe to cross. The location of the flashers on the north side of East Warm Springs Avenue is also poorly located in terms of catching the drivers' attention.	Relocate the signal crossing buttons adjacent to the curb ramp. Add audible alert to flashing beacon system. Relocate the flashers on the north side to a better viewing position to catch the drivers' attention. Add a raised crosswalk to make pedestrians and bicyclists more visible.	Southwest corner of Council Springs subdivision along East Warm Springs Avenue and the Idaho Power substation access road.	Everyone	ACHD
3	<b>Dangerous Roundabout Bicycle Ramps</b>	When pedestrians who are blind or low vision track along the left side of the sidewalk at the roundabout, they are at risk of walking directly into traffic. These on and off ramps can be interpreted as extensions of the sidewalk, leading pedestrians directly into traffic.	Install tactile indicators, like those used in subway and rail stations, to warn pedestrians who are blind or low vision not to proceed.	Roundabouts along East Parkcenter Boulevard	Vision	ACHD
4	<b>Low-Stress Visual Street Crossing Signals</b>	Rapid and bright flashing lights notifying drivers of pedestrians crossing the street can be a barrier to people with autism causing confusion, or people with epilepsy causing seizures.	Research visual street crossing technology that does not negatively impact people with cognitive disabilities.	General	Cognitive	ACHD
5	<b>Missing Truncated Dome — Greenbelt Access Point</b>	The pedestrian crossing is missing a truncated dome. The pedestrian access point from the sidewalk on East Warm Springs Avenue across the street from East Valley Subdivision is missing a truncated dome alerting blind or low vision pedestrians that they are crossing a private alley to access the Greenbelt.	Install truncated dome on East Warm Springs Avenue side of the private lane in the Ben's Crow Inn Subdivision at the Greenbelt access point.	Greenbelt access at East Warm Springs Avenue across the private lane in the Ben's Crow Inn Subdivision.	Vision	ACHD
6	<b>Alley Storm Grates with Wide Spacing</b>	The storm drain grates in the alley exceed 1/2 inch for grate gap width. These gaps create a serious risk for people using mobility devices, white canes, service dogs and cyclists.	Install ADA compliant grates.	Alley running east-West perpendicular just north of East Warm Springs Avenue.	Everyone	ACHD
7	<b>Real Estate Signs Blocking Public Rights-of-Way</b>	Open house and for sale signs are placed in the middle of sidewalks and in the middle of curb ramps creating barriers for pedestrians with disabilities.	Work with the Regional Realtor Association to develop education bulletins and training on signage placement.	General	Everyone	ACHD

## INVENTORY

#	Issue	Description	Recommendation	Location	Disability	Responsible Entity
8	<b>Missing Curb Ramps</b>	The Privada development between the Foothills and East Barber Drive is missing curb ramps on the sidewalks that provide pedestrian access to the subdivision.	Install curb ramps.	Privada Subdivision	Everyone	ACHD
9	<b>Missing Truncated Domes</b>	Placement of truncated domes are not consistent at curb ramps on one or both sides of pedestrian crossings.	Install truncated domes according to the Public Right-Of-Way Proposed Guidelines (PROWAG) and the ADA.	Mill District Subdivision	Vision	ACHD
10	<b>Mill District Traffic Circles</b>	Traffic circles in the Mill District do not include curb ramps and requires pedestrians using wheelchairs or other mobility devices to navigate through the street. Also, inconsistent placement of curb ramps creates barriers for individuals who are blind or low vision to cross the street safely.	Add curb ramps to allow safe crossing.	Mill District	Mobility Vision	ACHD
11	<b>Roundabout Pedestrian Crossing Misalignment</b>	The pedestrian crossing locations in the roundabout is located close to the circle, causing the crossing to curve. This curve prevents the curb ramps and the truncated domes installed in the crossing to squarely align.	Install pedestrian crossings before the curve and where the curb ramps and crossings align in order for pedestrians who are blind or low vision safely cross the street.	East Warm Springs Avenue and East Parkcenter Boulevard	Vision Mobility	ACHD
12	<b>Pedestrian Pathways — General</b>	Several problems with the location of curb ramps and truncated domes in Barber Place.	Design curb ramps and sidewalks that are accessible, consistent, and intuitive for pedestrians.	Barber Place, General	Mobility Vision	ACHD
13	<b>Missing Pedestrian Crossings</b>	No direct and marked pedestrian crossing at Council Springs Road between The Terraces and the Harris Ranch Business Complex	Install crossing facilities where pedestrians are likely to cross, encouraging low-stress interconnectivity through neighborhoods, including high-stress roads, like East Warm Springs Avenue.	Terraces to Harris Ranch Business Complex: East Council Springs Road between The Terraces and the Harris Ranch Business Complex	Everyone	ACHD
14	<b>Sidewalk and Curb Ramp Upgrades — Golden Dawn Trailer Park</b>	The sidewalk and curb ramps are narrow and lack full connectivity on the north side of East Warm Springs between Council Springs and East Junior High.	Install new sidewalks and curb ramps.	Golden Dawn Trailer Park North side of East Warm Springs Avenue between Council Springs and South Lysted Avenue	Mobility	ACHD
15	<b>Missing Curb Ramps Connecting Subdivisions</b>	A vertical curb runs the entire distance of South Council Spring Road, which prevents pedestrians using wheelchairs and other alternative mobility devices from traveling east-west and accessing neighborhood trails through the Spring Creek Subdivision.	Install curb ramps in on South Council Spring Road adjacent to Spring Creek Subdivision trails.	South Council Spring Road and Newcastle Drive	Mobility	ACHD

## INVENTORY

#	Issue	Description	Recommendation	Location	Disability	Responsible Entity
16	<b>Missing Curb Ramp; Barrier to Crossing</b>	The north-south pedestrian crossing is missing ADA-compliant curb ramps, and the concrete island is blocking direct crossing, requiring pedestrians to walk or roll around this barrier in an unprotected environment.	Install ADA-compliant curb ramps in location not impeded by concrete island.	East Timbersaw Drive and North Harris Ranch Road	Everyone	ACHD
<b>CITY OF BOISE</b>						
17	<b>No Accessible Foothill Trails</b>	There are no accessible trails in the Foothills in Barber Valley.	Improve the existing trail system to meet or exceed the accessibility guidelines for Outdoor Developed Areas. Design new trail systems in the Foothills for people with disabilities. Encourage trail users with disabilities to actively participate on Foothill trails advisory boards and planning committees.	Foothills in Barber Valley	Mobility Vision	City of Boise
18	<b>Poorly Located Stairs to Outdoor Pathways</b>	The Greenbelt access point behind the Barber Place assisted living facility include stairs instead of ramps. There are no accessible access points from this facility to the rear pedestrian paths. An access point with a single 4" step was installed instead of a ramp, for example.	Designs should be universal and ramp access should be the rule, not the exception.	Barber Place pathway behind assisted living facility	Mobility	City of Boise
19	<b>Bike Racks</b>	Bike racks are incorrectly installed causing bikes to protrude into the public right-of-way blocking accessible routes.	Install bike racks in such a way as not to protrude into the public right-of-way.	Coffee Mill	Everyone	City of Boise
20	<b>Accessible Access Points</b>	The accessible pathways in Marianne Williams Park do not connect to Barber Place Condos. Entry points have vertical curbs, with one exception, there is a single point of egress from the park pathway to an accessible parking space. However, the accessible access point is narrow and runs along a steep drop off into the park.	Include accessible connection points by adding curb ramps to sidewalks and adding accessible pathways leading from the park into the Barber Place Condos. Curb ramps or zero-step entry points should be the rule, not the exception. Pedestrians with disabilities should have multiple points of access, not just the point of access adjacent to an ADA parking space.	Marianne Williams Park & Barber Place Condos	Mobility Vision	City of Boise
21	<b>Barber Valley Wayfinding</b>	Barber Valley lacks a comprehensive wayfinding system. Pedestrians who are blind or low vision can't find their way through Barber Valley preventing them from using the Greenbelt, pathways, and trail systems. Information signs are not effectively communicated to people who are blind or low vision.	Explore comprehensive wayfinding system that combines signage, maps, symbols, colors, and audible communication. Integrate mobile applications, digital displays, RFID, and other technology.		Everyone	City of Boise

INVENTORY						
#	Issue	Description	Recommendation	Location	Disability	Responsible Entity
22	<b>Inaccessible Footbridge in East Valley Playground</b>	The walking surface of the footbridge is made of iron grating. The gaps between the grates exceed 1 inch. Wheels and casters on mobility devices fall between the gaps, as well as cane tips and dog paws.	Replace the grate on the footbridge where the gap widths do not exceed ½”.	East Valley Subdivision Trail	Mobility	City of Boise
23	<b>Private Playgrounds</b>	The private playground in the East Valley Subdivision has an accessible pathway to the playground equipment, but the equipment does not include any accessible features. The lack of accessible playground equipment excludes children, parents, and families with disabilities. The message sent to children with disabilities is they are different preventing them from making friends with children in their neighborhoods.	Include accessible playground equipment, ground covering, and pathways when building private playgrounds in subdivisions.	East Valley Playground, General	Mobility	City of Boise
24	<b>Pedestrian Access Points</b>	The dental clinic and daycare in the Harris Ranch business complex have no protected accessible pedestrian access.	Ensure sidewalks include accessible curb ramps and connect to the businesses in the complex. Design protected or marked pedestrian pathways through parking areas.	Harris Ranch Business Complex	Everyone	City of Boise
25	<b>Missing Clubhouse Pool Lifts</b>	Lifts are not installed at clubhouse pools, preventing residents with disabilities from enjoying the pool.	Require builders to include a lift with new pool construction.	Subdivision Clubhouses	Mobility	City of Boise
26	<b>Better Park Signage for Service Animals</b>	Signage in Marianne Williams Park prohibited service animals. The sign stated bicycles, and dogs, including service animals, are only allowed on Greenbelt and not in Marianne Williams Park.	Ensure signs in city parks are welcoming to guide dogs and service animals. Boise Parks and Recreation responded immediately to our request during this project to replace signs in Marianne Williams Park	General Parks	All Disabilities	City of Boise
27	<b>Foliage Protruding in the Pathways</b>	Plants, trees, and shrubs are growing over the pathways, creating barriers to pedestrians who are blind or low vision or who have mobility disabilities.	Trim foliage and keep it from blocking the pathways.	Marianne Williams Park	Everyone	City of Boise
28	<b>Add Space Around Park Benches for Mobility Devices and Strollers.</b>	Benches in parks include a concrete platform large enough for the bench. However, there is not enough clear ground space for a wheelchair or alternative mobility device to park. The lack of space forces individuals who use mobility devices to park on the Greenbelt, obstructing pedestrian traffic.	Extend the width of the concrete platform to provide accessible ground floor space for individuals using wheelchairs, other mobility devices, as well as children in strollers.	General Parks	Everyone	City of Boise
28	<b>Barrier to Nature Trail Entrance</b>	The log fence and pedestrian access point is too narrow and configured in a way that prevents access by a pedestrian using wheelchairs or other mobility devices.	Replace with a wider entry.	Nature Trail along the north side of Boise River, west of Eckert Bridge	Mobility	City of Boise

**INVENTORY**

#	Issue	Description	Recommendation	Location	Disability	Responsible Entity
30	<b>Barrier to Homestead Trail</b>	The gate is kept locked, preventing access to Homestead Trail by individuals who use wheelchairs and other mobility devices.	Remove the gate or install an accessible entry point.	Homestead Trailhead, north end of South Council Springs Road	Mobility	City of Boise
31	<b>Accessible Parking Space Access Aisles in Wrong Location</b>	Van accessible parking spaces are installed with the access aisle on the left side of the space, requiring lift equipped vehicles to back-in.	Place the access aisle on the right side of the accessible parking space when possible.	All locations	Mobility Lift Equipped Vans	City of Boise
32	<b>Poorly Placed Park Signage</b>	Several park signs are installed in the pedestrian pathway. The sign height is too low and poses a risk to pedestrians who are blind or low vision.	Install signs outside of the pedestrian pathways and mount signs with a minimum of 80" of clear headroom space.	General Parks	Vision	City of Boise
33	<b>Inaccessible Mail Collection Points</b>	One of the mail stations in Barber Place is not accessible for people who use wheelchairs or other mobility devices. There are no accessible curb ramps on the sidewalk where the mail station is located.	Install accessible pathways to all mail collection points.	Barber Place	Mobility	City of Boise
34	<b>Trail and Greenbelt Etiquette</b>	Pedestrians with disabilities may use the Greenbelt differently than non-disabled users. For example, service dogs might guide their handler away from dangerous drop off points and closer to the center of the pathway for safety reasons. People who use wheelchairs or other mobility devices may wheel on the right or left side of the pathway, depending on the slope of the trail.	Include language on city website and in brochures regarding Greenbelt and trail etiquette describing how individuals with disabilities may use the Greenbelt and trail system differently.	Greenbelt	Everyone	City of Boise
35	<b>Inaccessible Neighborhood Tour</b>	The vehicles used to transport participants of neighborhood tours is inaccessible.	Provide accessible vehicles for tours open to the public.	General	Mobility	City of Boise
36	<b>Inaccessible Subdivision Trails</b>	Trails between the foothills and subdivisions are not accessible to individuals who use wheelchairs or other mobility devices.	Incorporate an accessible trail system in new and old developments.	River Heights to East Valley	Everyone	City of Boise
37	<b>Lack of Accessible Public Park Facilities</b>	Rapid and bright flashing lights notifying drivers of pedestrians crossing the street can be a barrier to people with autism causing confusion, or people with epilepsy causing seizures.	New parks should include accessible equipment, surfaces, and pathways.	New and Existing Parks	Everyone	City of Boise

INVENTORY						
#	Issue	Description	Recommendation	Location	Disability	Responsible Entity
38	<b>Business Access</b>	The pedestrian crossing is missing a truncated dome. The pedestrian access point from the sidewalk on East Warm Springs Avenue across the street from East Valley Subdivision is missing a truncated dome alerting blind or low vision pedestrians that they are crossing a private alley to access the Greenbelt.	Planned business developments should incorporate the concept “Accessibility First,” designing in accessibility at the beginning. The Coffee Mill could install an accessible access point at the northwest corner near the patio.	General	Everyone	City of Boise
39	<b>Dog Waste Stations Placed Off the Accessible Route</b>	There are no accessible trails in the Foothills in Barber Valley.	Install dog waste stations next to the accessible pathway, within accessible reach ranges. The stations must have bases that are detectable by white canes. Incorporate wayfinding technology to allow people who are blind to locate the station.	Northwest corner of Hardesty and Old Hickory Road	Mobility Vision	City of Boise
40	<b>Options to Purchase and Build Accessible Homes</b>	The Greenbelt access point behind the Barber Place assisted living facility include stairs instead of ramps. There are no accessible access points from this facility to the rear pedestrian paths. An access point with a single 4” step was installed instead of a ramp, for example.	Provide choices for homebuyers with disabilities to build a home that meets their specific needs.	General	Everyone	City of Boise
41	<b>Limited Greenbelt Access at Arboretum Apartments</b>	Several problems with the location of curb ramps and truncated domes in Barber Place.	New developments should incorporate universal design and ensure that all access points, as much as practical, are accessible.	Arboretum Apartments	Mobility	City of Boise
42	<b>Single-Family Homes Not Visitable</b>	One of the mail stations in Barber Place is not accessible for people who use wheelchairs or other mobility devices. There are no accessible curb ramps on the sidewalk where the mail station is located.	Visitability design should be incentivized throughout the valley. Zero-step entry, 32” minimum door width, and first floor bathrooms that are usable by a person who uses a wheelchair benefit everyone and do not add unreasonable costs to a development project.	New Housing Developments	Everyone	City of Boise
43	<b>Neighborhood Association Toolkit – ADA Resources</b>	Resources are nonexistent or limited for neighborhood associations to provide sign language interpreters and other auxiliary aids and services for meetings and events. Alternative formats for print material are also not offered or provided.	Include information in the Neighborhood Association Toolkit regarding accessibility and provide funding for neighborhood associations to pay for accessible communication resources, such as sign language interpreters and other forms of communication.	General	Sensory	City of Boise

INVENTORY						
#	Issue	Description	Recommendation	Location	Disability	Responsible Entity
44	<b>Greenbelt Access Ramp Too Steep</b>	The pathway slope that connects to the Greenbelt is too steep and unusable by people who use wheelchairs or other alternative mobility devices.	Correct the slope and grade to create an accessible pathway that connects to the Greenbelt.	Ben’s Crow Inn Subdivision Greenbelt Access Point	Mobility	City of Boise
VALLEY REGIONAL TRANSIT VRT						
45	<b>Accessible Bus Stops</b>	There is no accessible bus stop at the last stop of the 1 Harris Ranch via Parkcenter route.	Install accessible “neighborhood transit center” on the south side of East Warm Springs Avenue in front of the Coffee Mill that includes a bus shelter, e-scooter parking, and bike racks and bike repair station.	East Warm Springs Avenue in front of The Coffee Mill	Everyone	VRT
46	<b>Extend Bus Service</b>	The existing bus route does not extend the full length of Barber Valley, leaving residents further east to travel several miles to reach the nearest bus stop, nor does it offer service on Saturday or in the evenings.	Extend the bus route to East Valley Subdivision and extend days and hours of operation.	1 Harris Ranch via Parkcenter bus route	Everyone	VRT
MISC.						
47	<b>Confusing HOA Policies</b>	HOA clubhouse language in rental policies excludes pets. The policies can be misinterpreted to exclude service animals.	Clarify language in policies reflecting state and federal law allowing service animals in buildings and on property.	Subdivisions	All Disabilities	Homeowners Association (HOAs)
48	<b>Accessible Medical Equipment</b>	Equipment in medical clinics, such as exam tables, are often not adjustable to accommodate patients of short stature, with limited mobility or use wheelchairs or other mobility devices.	Recommend that the new clinic purchase accessible exam equipment and follow the ADA guidelines for medical facilities.	N/A	Mobility Short Stature	Clinic Owner
49	<b>Audio Description — Shakespeare Festival</b>	Idaho Shakespeare Festival provides sign language interpreters for guests that are deaf or hard of hearing, as well as closed captioning.	Explore methods of providing audio description services for plays at the Idaho Shakespeare Festival. This service provides audio descriptions of actors, scenes, and stage activity for audience members who are blind or low vision.	Idaho Shakespeare Festival	Vision	Idaho Shakespeare Festival
50	<b>Boulders Blocking Trail</b>	Three large boulders are located across pedestrian pathway in order to prevent vehicles from using the trail.	Remove boulders and install vehicle barrier barriers that do not restrict accessible pedestrian traffic.	Trail connection on North Harris Ranch Road directly across the street from East Timbersaw Drive.	Mobility	Developer

## Findings Summary

### Design Shortcomings

Many of the problems we discovered point to a design review process that fails to understand and/or incorporate universal design while barely meeting minimum standards for accessibility under the law. For example, pathway access from parks to subdivisions provide limited accessible egress, include unnecessary steps, and often direct pedestrians down sidewalks with no connectivity, or up curb ramps that lead to stairs. These issues point to a need to strengthen the design review process and/or the inspection prior to occupancy.

### Accessible Public Right-of-Way

There is generally a need to improve the accessibility of pedestrian pathways and trails, particularly the more low-stress pathways that connect neighborhoods. Some of the accessibility issues we identified may be the result of development in Barber Valley occurring at different points in time. Other barriers are intended to serve a valuable purpose, but inadvertently create barriers, such as boulders across trails to prevent motor vehicle traffic. These issues point to a need to think about connectivity along streets, but also through neighborhoods on less formal trails and paths.

### Up Front Participation

People with disabilities must have greater levels of involvement in how our neighborhoods are developed. Whether its setting a bold and aggressive agenda to incorporate visitability in new home construction or providing input on how trails are developed in the foothills, upfront input from users with disabilities will



Grated footbridge that catches wheelchair casters (Inventory #22)

result in safer, more usable — and most important — more livable communities for everyone. This issue points to the need to create avenues for people with disabilities to elevate a vision and address concerns in a way that results in change.

## Recommendations

### Harris Ranch Town Site

The Harris Ranch Town Site is currently under development. The following suggestions are based on review of similar developments in the area:

- Elevators to access residences in multi-use buildings
- Sidewalks that remain wide, without encroachments by furniture or restaurant seating
- Eliminate vertical curbs
- Incorporate tactile elements assisting people who are blind or low vision to differentiate between the sidewalk and street/parking lot
- No diagonal curb ramps
- Safe pedestrian connectivity through parking lots
- No interior building elevation changes requiring steps (Example: The Tavern in Bown Crossing)
- Incorporate raised crosswalks

### Visitability

#### Create incentives to encourage new private housing development that is visitable.

Treasure Valley municipal governments, developers, and builders should embrace the concept of visitability and explore creative ways to incentivize the inclusion of visitability design into new homes and neighborhoods.

Visitability is the idea that single-family or owner-occupied housing is designed so that it can be lived in or visited by people who have trouble with steps or stairs, or use mobility devices, such as walkers or wheelchairs. To be visitable, a house must have at least one zero-step entrance, it must have doors at least 32 inches in width, and at least one main floor bathroom that a wheelchair can access.

While a small percentage of homes in Barber Valley are close to having a zero-step entrance, the majority include at least one significant step into homes at the front door, patio, and garage entries.



Neighborhood connection point with no marked crossing or curb ramps (Inventory #13)

The Treasure Valley is experiencing a housing crisis, and by all estimations, more than 15,000 new single-family homes will be needed by 2021. Recently, new home construction has been at an all-time high, but people with mobility disabilities have been built out of most neighborhoods both as homebuyers, but also as community members hoping to visit family and friends.

The inability to visit makes creating and keeping friendships harder, it cuts people off from meetings where information is exchanged and decisions are made, and it isolates people from their community. If a person with a physical disability buys a new home, it can be costly to modify to make it accessible.

### Statistics

- More than 90% of the existing housing stock is not accessible.
- Approximately 70% of Americans live in single-family homes.
- At least 21% of US households have at least one person with a physical limitation.
- 60% probability that a newly built single-family home will house at least one disabled person during the next 50 years.

—*Journal of the American Planning Association*

- 80% of Americans over age 50 want to remain in their current homes.
- 95% of Americans over age 75 want to remain in their current homes.

—AARP

“ I use a manual wheelchair and live in a new, modern neighborhood, but I can’t get into a single new home to visit my neighbors without assistance.”

—*Jeremy Maxand, Barber Valley Resident and IAP Board member*

### Accessible Foothills Trails

**Fund a working group comprised of foothills recreationist with disabilities to develop a plan for expanding accessible trails in the Ridge to Rivers system.**

It’s hard to imagine Boise without visualizing the Boise Foothills. The Foothills are a part of what makes Boise and the Treasure Valley special. From bike rides and morning hikes, to school field trips through the Foothills Learning Center. But for many, the Foothills are something to be seen but not experienced. For others, they are neither seen nor experienced.

From 2003 to 2015, the 100 miles of Ridge to Rivers trails was expanded by 90 new miles. Although the system was almost doubled, very little of this investment included accessible trails.

In Barber Valley, there are three established trails: West Highland Valley, Homestead, and Cobb Trails. None of these trails are accessible. In fact, the trailheads include gates that are either locked or are impassable with mobility devices, such as a wheelchair. Homestead Trail is usable with a handcycle, but the trailhead is not. The recently added Peace Valley Overlook includes a steep but wide access road from the River Heights Phase II Subdivision.

While the Ridge to Rivers 10-Year Management Plan includes expanding access to trails for people with disabilities, no clear plan or resources exist to achieve this goal. Furthermore, land managers have often failed to include analysis as required under the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) to determine why new trails are, or are not, being made accessible.

Ridge to Rivers and its land management partners should fund an effort to bring disabled trail users and recreationalists together to build on the 10-Year Management Plan to develop accessible trails in the foothills. This effort should not be limited to trail users with mobility-related disabilities but should also include trail users who are blind or low vision. Ridge to Rivers should consider a trail pilot project to explore

designs and technologies that make foothills trails more accessible to various disability groups.

An effort should also be made to include accessible trails in various areas of the foothills, including Barber Valley, in order to bring equity to the program and to meet the needs of the broader community.

### ***Mayor’s Advisory Council on Disabilities***

#### **Establish a Mayor’s Advisory Council on Disabilities**

Boise has a set a goal of becoming the most livable city in the country, but this cannot be achieved unless we are the most accessible city in the country. To this end, the City of Boise should establish a cross disability council, committee, or advisory board to elevate problems with access, but also to champion a vision for a truly accessible and livable city. Cities around the country that take seriously the issues of disability have established similar bodies with great success. Currently, the City of Boise has an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Parking Advisory Council, which is often mistaken as the “ADA Advisory Council.” The parking committee addresses issues of accessible parking, both on street and in private lots, but nothing more. Beyond formal complaints, there is no avenue for community members with disabilities to specifically address disability-related issues.

In addition to the Mayor’s Council, efforts should be made to ensure representations on all city committees, councils, and commissions by people with various disabilities.

**“ If you’re not at the table,  
you’re on the menu.”**

### ***Neighborhood Association Tool Kit — ADA Inclusion***

#### **Add accessibility information in the Neighborhood Association Toolkit Establish a fund to pay for licensed sign language interpreters at association meetings and events**

Boise neighborhoods, including Barber Valley, are some of the strongest in the country, in no small part because of the resources and support provided by the City of Boise. There are approximately 35 neighborhood associations in Boise. These associations are formal entities recognized by city government. The goal of these associations is to, “...put work into their communities to create vibrant and thriving neighborhoods that increase the livability for their



Park bench with no space for wheelchairs or strollers (Inventory #28)

residents.” The City of Boise provides an online resource for new and existing associations. This “Toolkit” includes information on establishing an association, electing a board, holding meetings, and applying for Neighborhood Improvement Grants.

Are association websites and digital materials accessible? Are meeting locations accessible? Are licensed sign language interpreters available, and are there resources to pay for them? Opportunities to enhance this Toolkit, and the neighborhood association program in general, include adding information on techniques to ensure association meetings are physically and programmatically accessible, and establishing a fund that neighborhood associations can access to pay for licensed sign language interpreters at meetings and events.

### ***Accessible Roundabouts Pilot Project***

#### **Pilot a project with blind and low vision pedestrians to make roundabouts more accessible and safer to navigate.**

As roundabouts become more popular in Ada County, methods of designing the crossing to increase accessibility and safety for pedestrians who are blind or low vision are imperative. Three of our steering committee members indicated they will avoid a roundabout in its current state if given the choice due to the difficulty detecting traffic flow and patterns. People want the option to walk for health and feel connected to their communities. For many people who are blind or low vision, walking is a necessity and roundabouts are in effect creating a barrier to accessing programs, services, and activities.

The experience and feedback of the walk review participants confirm the statement from the Federal Highway Administration describing why modern roundabouts are problematic and dangerous for people who are blind or low vision. First, the curvilinear nature of roundabouts alters the normal audible and tactile cues used to find crosswalks. Next, roundabouts do not typically include the normal audible and tactile cues used by pedestrians who are blind or low vision to align themselves with the crosswalk throughout the crossing maneuver. Finally, the sound of circulating traffic masks the audible cues that pedestrians who are blind will use to identify the appropriate time to enter the crosswalk (both detecting a gap and detecting that a vehicle has yielded).

(<https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/intersection/innovative/roundabouts/fhwasa10006/>)

The roundabouts along East Warm Springs Avenue also include bicycle on and off ramps that provide access between the roadway and the sidewalk. These ramps have no tactile marker differentiating a regular curb ramp versus a bicycle ramp for a pedestrian who is blind or low vision. Pedestrians using a white cane and tracking along the left side of the sidewalk are at risk of walking into traffic.

Ada County Highway District (ACHD) and Idaho Transportation Department (ITD), must work cooperatively with groups who are blind or low vision to ensure accessibility is integrated into the design. The United States Access Board describes multiple design features that can improve accessibility and safety of roundabouts for all pedestrians, especially for people who are blind or low vision.

These include:

- Using raised splitter islands with a different tactile feel than the street
- Raising the crosswalk to make pedestrians more visible
- Installing “Yield to Pedestrian” signs
- Adding yield cameras

### ***Improve Bus Service Amenities***

**Install permanent, full amenity bus stops, and work to improve the efficiency and service area in Barber Valley.**

Public transportation is critical for community members with disabilities, often serving as the primary mode of transportation to and from work, shopping, and



Picture of inaccessible playground equipment (Inventory #23)

**“ As a blind person, I know the challenges people with disabilities face every day navigating safely in our city. All people, regardless of age, ability, walking, bicycling, or using a wheelchair, benefit from thoughtfully designed curb ramps, pathways, and street crossings.”**

**—Dianna Willis, IAP Board Member**

recreation. Investments should be made to install full-service transit stop amenities and extend service further east with a route that reduces trip time from Barber Valley to the downtown core.

Valley Regional Transit (VRT) operates the 1 Harris Ranch via Parkcenter bus every half hour during peak operating hours (every hour mid-day) from downtown Boise, through Boise State University, out to Eckert Road and East Warm Springs Avenue, and then to downtown. There are currently four designated bus stops on this route in Barber Valley: East Parkcenter Boulevard and East Barber Valley Drive (near Arboretum apartments), East Warm Springs Avenue and South Wise Way (just east of the large roundabout), East Warm Springs Avenue and North Harris Ranch Road (just west of the bypass), and East Warm Springs Avenue and South Caddis Way (near The Coffee Mill).

As currently located, these stops are within a quarter mile of residents on the west side of Barber Valley. We recommend locating a permanent and fully accessible bus stop at East Warm Springs Avenue and South

Caddis Way directly in front of The Coffee Mill in the grass easement adjacent to Warm Springs Avenue. This location has room for a concrete platform, weatherized shelter, bike racks, and designated e-scooter parking. This location is close to amenities, such as the coffee shop and the market, and is far enough from the intersection that it will not impact traffic movement.

### **Accessible Pedestrian Corridors**

#### **Complete the east-west and north-south accessible pedestrian corridors.**

All pedestrians want pathways through neighborhoods that are safe, accessible, and create diversity of experience. Barber Valley’s transit coordinator backbone is East Warm Springs Avenue, running east-west through the center of the valley. Below are opportunities to establish complete east-west and north-south accessible pedestrian connectivity in Barber Valley.

East-West Corridors (Foothills side of E Warm Springs Avenue):

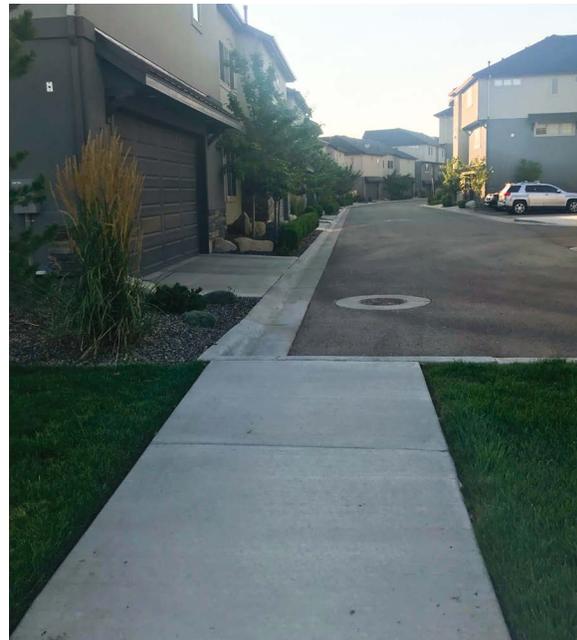
- Remove boulders blocking access to the pedestrian trail between Dallas Harris Estates and Spring Creek at the intersection of North Harris Ranch Road and East Timbersaw Drive.
- Install curb ramps along the west hand sidewalk of South Council Springs Road, providing access to neighborhood trails in Council Springs.
- Improve the subdivision walking trail along the Penitentiary Canal just north of East Junior High west to East Highland Valley Road.
- Install sidewalks and curb ramps along East Warm Springs Avenue from East Signal Rock Drive to Highway 21.

East-West Corridors (River side of East Warm Springs Avenue):

- Bring the pedestrian ramp connecting the Ben’s Crow Inn Subdivision with the Greenbelt into ADA compliance.
- Establish a pedestrian crossing at the intersection of South Eckert Road and East Arrow Junction Drive.
- Establish a pedestrian crossing over South Council Springs Road between the Harris Ranch office alley and the Terraces driveway.
- Replace the wood pole barricades at the entrance of the nature trail running north along the Boise River between South Eckert Road and the Greenbelt.

“ I do think that having safe crossings at intervals along Warm Springs Avenue should be a high priority, and a corridor that connects from East to West on both sides of Warm Springs would improve neighborhood community connectivity and safety.”

—Alison Steven, Barber Valley Resident



Sidewalk with no accessible access point from park to subdivision (Inventory #20)

- Replace storm drain grates in the residential alley just north of East Warm Springs Avenue, between East Warm Springs (running north-south) and South Honeycomb Way, with smaller grated covers.

#### **North-South Corridors**

- Consider low-stress design features as part of the new north-south connection from Marianne Williams Park at Warm Springs (bypass) to what is now South Wise Way and east towards the Harris Ranch Town Site.
- Relocate the push button signal closer to the roadway and “behind” sidewalk traffic, at the East Parkcenter Boulevard and the substation access road.
- Install curb ramps and truncated domes at the intersection of East Warm Springs and South Council Springs Road.
- Install tactile indications at the two vehicle access points along East Warm Springs Avenue and in front of The Terraces.

- Install a push button activated pedestrian crossing at the intersection of East Warm Springs Avenue and North Shakespeare Way.

### ***Smartphone Reporting Tool***

#### **Develop an accessible smartphone app to report problems or barriers in the public rights-of-way.**

During this project, it became clear that a systematic way to document and report barriers in the public rights-of-way is critical in Boise. From construction zone barriers to ridesharing e-scooters, an increasing number of obstacles are blocking sidewalks and curb ramps for all users, not just people with disabilities. Public agencies are usually responsive when a barrier is reported, but often it is unclear how, or to whom, reports of obstructions should be directed. A simple, smartphone reporting tool could help report barriers in a timely manner and to the correct agency.

### ***Strengthen City Review Process***

During the on-the-ground accessibility review, it became clear that while municipal staff responsible for review of new developments comply with the International Building Codes, these minimal codes do not go far enough in creating truly accessible neighborhoods. We found many discrepancies in compliance with the ADA, including barriers that should have been caught in the design review process.

Barriers identified include:

- Sidewalks that lead nowhere that stop with no destination or curb ramp
- Curb ramps that lead to stairs
- Truncated domes and curb ramps that direct blind or low vision pedestrians into the center of intersections
- Mailbox stations with no curb ramp access
- Poorly located wheelchair accessible access points from apartment complex to Greenbelt
- Stairs rather than ramps to access the Greenbelt from an assisted living facility
- Limited accessible access points from public space to residential space
- Missing curb ramps

Some of these issues are failures to comply with the ADA, but others are simply poor design. The City of Boise must strengthen its development and design review processes to incorporate universal design and the perspectives and input of people with disabilities. Review staff should be trained in the ADA and universal design. Plans should be reviewed for universal accessibility, not just meeting the minimum requirements.

### ***Making Our Parks More Accessible***

Boise has some of the best open space, public parks, and river access in the country. Many neighborhoods are close to green space and the community has twice voted to invest tens of millions of dollars to preserve more open space and improve water quality. Overall, our parks are safe, beautiful, well maintained, and generally accessible to people with disabilities.

During our accessibility review, we identified opportunities to make our parks even more welcoming and accessible to people with disabilities, including:

- Installing dog waste stations so they are accessible for people who are blind or low vision, or who use wheelchairs
- Locating signs out of the path of travel of people who are blind or low vision
- Providing additional landing space next to park benches where wheelchairs and other alternative mobility devices can park
- Maintaining clear pathways between park furniture and plant and tree foliage
- Installing signs that welcome service animals
- Including accessible playground equipment, surfaces, and pathways

Accessible playgrounds are an important part of childhood development, and playgrounds that are not accessible prevent children with disabilities from making friends and socializing like other kids. Inaccessible playgrounds can be one of the first places children with disabilities learn they are different from other children and experience discrimination.

Play teaches children how to make friends, establish rules, and navigate personal relationships. But for kids whose disabilities keep them from using playgrounds, those opportunities can be lost.

Inclusive and accessible playgrounds enhance our community and integrate families with children who have disabilities. Accessible playgrounds provide children of all abilities the opportunity to explore, interact, and learn like other children. Most important, accessible playgrounds give kids with disabilities an opportunity to have fun and experience joy.

### ***Build Accessibility into New Developments***

Developers designing and building new neighborhoods or communities should be incentivized or required to make shared features in development accessible to everyone. The cost of installing a pool lift or making nature trails accessible is minimal and absorbed into the price of each home. Failing to make neighborhood amenities accessible means homeowners with disabilities that pay HOA fees are charged for services they cannot take advantage of.

(Source: May Recreation, What is an “Inclusive Playground”)

- Include an accessible lift in community pools for use by residents with disabilities
- Develop HOA policies that are welcoming to service animals
- Ensure subdivision trails are accessible
- Include accessible equipment in private playgrounds, including equipment, surfaces, and pathways
- Build visitable homes (see recommendation on Visitability)

### ***Accessible Wayfinding***

**Build a digital wayfinding system in Marianne Williams Park to demonstrate how smart technology can increase access for people with disabilities.**

Digital wayfinding technology is designed to enhance indoor and outdoor navigation for people with sensory, learning or intellectual disabilities. Marianne Williams Park, a 72-acre site located in East Barber Valley, is a beautiful place to walk, fish, and enjoy nature. Unfortunately, for people who cannot use visual cues to navigate indoor and outdoor spaces, environments like Marianne Williams Park can be overwhelming, isolating, and potentially dangerous.

Digital wayfinding technology is a potential cost-effective and user-friendly solution. This innovative smart technology creates a seamless audio-based navigation system. Through the use of smartphones and Bluetooth beacons, people are able to:

- Find facilities, such as restrooms, accessible fishing overlook, and picnic shelter
- Navigate independently and safely with real-time information about park entrance locations, intersecting pathways, nearby streets, and bus stops
- Safely and efficiently connect to businesses and services in proximity to park

## **Related Reports**

**There are several reports we feel are important to consider as accessibility projects move forward in Barber Valley:**

**AARP Livability Index** – The AARP Public Policy Institute developed the Livability Index as a web-based tool to measure community livability. Users can search the Index by address, ZIP Code, or community to find an overall livability score, as well as a score for each of seven major livability categories: housing, neighborhood, transportation, environment, health, engagement, and opportunity.

<https://livabilityindex.aarp.org/>

**Barber Valley Placemaking** – Idaho Smart Growth and McKibben + Cooper developed a Placemaking report that identifies opportunities for making better places in Barber Valley. We recommend incorporating recommendations and lessons learned from this report in any places developed as part of the Barber Valley Placemaking project.

[https://www.idahosmartgrowth.org/app/uploads/2016/06/5-1516\\_BVPlacemaking.pdf](https://www.idahosmartgrowth.org/app/uploads/2016/06/5-1516_BVPlacemaking.pdf)

**Wayfinding & Network Signage Report** – Barber Valley Neighborhood Association commissioned Idaho Smart Growth to begin the initial development of a biking and walking network wayfinding system for Barber Valley. We recommend aligning this project with the digital wayfinding recommendation in Barber Valley and incorporating digital wayfinding technology into future wayfinding work.

## Next Steps

This report is just a snapshot in time, nothing more, nothing less. What we do with this report is what's important. It is our hope that the findings and recommendations will be used in the following ways:

- Empower people with disabilities to use what we've learned, and to conduct their own reviews, to improve accessibility in their neighborhoods.
- Provide insight to municipal planners who review and approve plans for new developments, all of which have long-term impacts on the quality of our communities and lives.
- Create opportunities for highway agencies to engage people with disabilities to test new ideas and push the envelope on ways we can make the public rights-of-way safer and easier to use.
- Strengthen neighborhood associations by removing barriers and increasing participation by people with disabilities.
- Set our city on a course for a visionary future where universal design and emerging technology is the norm, not the exception, enhancing the quality of life for people with disabilities.

## About the Idaho Access Project

[www.idahoaccessproject.org](http://www.idahoaccessproject.org)

The Idaho Access Project is a non-profit organization composed of board members who have physical or sensory disabilities. Our mission is to eliminate physical, attitudinal, and policy barriers to ensure people with disabilities can live, work, and play in our neighborhoods and communities.

### Connect with the Idaho Access Project Team

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Dana Gover provides information, guidance, training, onsite reviews, and technical assistance on the Americans with Disabilities Act and other civil rights laws providing rights to people with disabilities in her role as Project Coordinator for the Northwest ADA Center-Idaho. Dana earned her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Communication, and her Master's Degree in Public Administration. She also is certified through the ADA Coordinators Training and Certification Program (ACTCP), serves as a board member of Living Independence Network Corporation, and the City of Boise's ADA Parking Advisory Committee.

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Jeremy Maxand is a Program Specialist with the Idaho State Independent Living Council and is adjunct faculty in the Sociology Department at Boise State University and the College of Western Idaho. Jeremy earned an Associate Degree in Criminal Justice Administration, a Bachelor's of Science in Sociology, and a Master's Degree in Applied Historical Research. He is certified through the ADA Coordinators Training and Certification Program and serves on the City of Boise's ADA Parking Advisory Committee and Open Space and Clean Water Advisory Council, Valley Regional Transits Regional Advisory Council, and the Ada County Highway Districts ADA Advisory Council.

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Dianna Willis is a Political Science graduate of Boise State University. She also earned graduate degrees in Applied Demography and Early Childhood Education. She has experience as a researcher and grant-writing consultant and has served in the nonprofit sector as both a volunteer and an employee.

## Resources

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Training and Technical Assistance Northwest ADA Center-Idaho, Dana Gover**  
 Email: [dananwadacenteridaho@gmail.com](mailto:dananwadacenteridaho@gmail.com)  
 ADA Technical Assistance Hotline (Voice and Text):  
 (208) 841-9422

**Idaho Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing**  
 Sierra McIver, Communications and Outreach Coordinator  
 Email: [Sierra.mciver@cdhh.idaho.gov](mailto:Sierra.mciver@cdhh.idaho.gov)  
 Office: (208) 334-0877  
 Cell: (208) 401-5625

## Visibility

**Basic Access to Homes**  
**Visitability**  
<https://visitability.org/>

**Federal, State, and Town Visitability Laws and Initiatives 2010**  
<https://www.cga.ct.gov/2010/rpt/2010-R-0101.htm>

**Visible Housing Review of Literature**  
<http://visiblehousingcanada.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Policy-Review-Visitability.pdf#page12>

**What is a Livable Community?**  
**AARP**  
<https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/about/info-2014/what-is-a-livable-community.html>

**Inclusive Design Gets Customers in the Door**  
 Eric Kingston, Fair Housing Forum  
<https://fairhousingforum.org/disabilities/inclusive-home-design-getting-customers-in-the-door/>

**Universal Design: Why Americans Need Home Design That Welcomes Everyone**  
<https://www.architecturaldigest.com/story/universal-design-living-laboratory>

## ADA Design Regulations and Guidelines

**ADA Guidelines and Standards**  
 United States Access Board  
<https://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards>

**A Planning Guide for Making Temporary Events Accessible to People With Disabilities**  
 ADA National Network  
<https://adata.org/publication/temporary-events-guide>

**The Rights of People with Disabilities in Inclusive Neighborhoods**  
<https://pronto-core-cdn.prontomarketing.com/2/wp-content/uploads/sites/2120/2017/12/Inclusive-Communities-c-2017.pdf>

## Public Right-of-Way

**Accessibility Resource Library**  
 Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)  
<https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/accessibility/>

**Methods of Crossing at Roundabouts for Visually Impaired Pedestrians: Review of Literature – ScienceDirect Roundabouts**  
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2046043016301307>

**Accessible Shared Streets Notable Practices and Considerations for Accommodating Pedestrians with Vision Disabilities**  
[https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle\\_pedestrian/publications/accessible\\_shared\\_streets/fhwahep17096.pdf](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/publications/accessible_shared_streets/fhwahep17096.pdf)

**Applying universal design to how people get around**  
<https://planning.org/planning/2018/feb/inclusivemobility/>

**Livable Streets**  
<https://www.marc.org/Transportation/Special-Projects/assets/Livable-Streets-universal-design-flier.aspx>

**Autism Planning and Design Guidelines 1.0**  
 Knowlton School of Architecture City and Regional Planning Program  
 August 2017 - June 2018  
[https://knowlton.osu.edu/sites/default/files/pdf/Autism%20P%20and%20D%20Standards\\_reduced.pdf](https://knowlton.osu.edu/sites/default/files/pdf/Autism%20P%20and%20D%20Standards_reduced.pdf)

**What is an "Inclusive Playground?"**  
<https://info.mayrecreation.com/blog/what-is-an-inclusive-playground>

**Short Film about Playground Inclusion Wins International Acclaim Respect Ability**  
<https://www.respectability.org/2018/12/short-film-about-playground-inclusion-wins-international-acclaim/>  
[https://youtu.be/Hz\\_d-cikWml](https://youtu.be/Hz_d-cikWml)

## Business Promotion

**Access Means Business**  
[https://fairhousingforum.org/wp-content/uploads/Ramp-Up-Idaho-InfoSheet\\_lowres.pdf](https://fairhousingforum.org/wp-content/uploads/Ramp-Up-Idaho-InfoSheet_lowres.pdf)

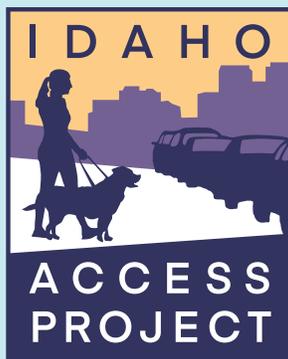
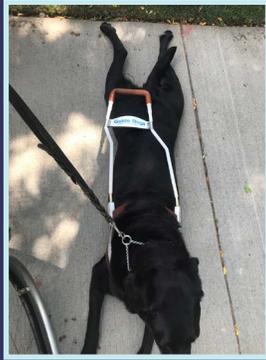
**BluePath**  
 Directory of Accessible Businesses  
<https://blue-path.org/>

## Funding

**GameTime**  
 Playground Grant Application Download  
<https://www.gametime.com/grant-download>

**Closing the Disability Gap: Reforming the Community Reinvestment Act Regulatory Framework**  
[http://bbi.syr.edu/assets/staff\\_bio\\_publications/2019-blank-closing-disability-gap.pdf](http://bbi.syr.edu/assets/staff_bio_publications/2019-blank-closing-disability-gap.pdf)

**Planning and Funding Accessible Pedestrian Facilities**  
 Institute of Transportation Engineers  
<https://www.ite.org/technical-resources/accessible/planning-and-funding-accessible-pedestrian-facilities/>



[www.idahoaccessproject.org](http://www.idahoaccessproject.org)