



(Left) "People love where they live," says real estate agent and Boise native Ryan Perez; (near left to right) The Platinum LEED-certified Banner Bank Building; Bown Crossing in southeast Boise; lush lawns and cared-for homes on Warm Springs Avenue



location, location, location

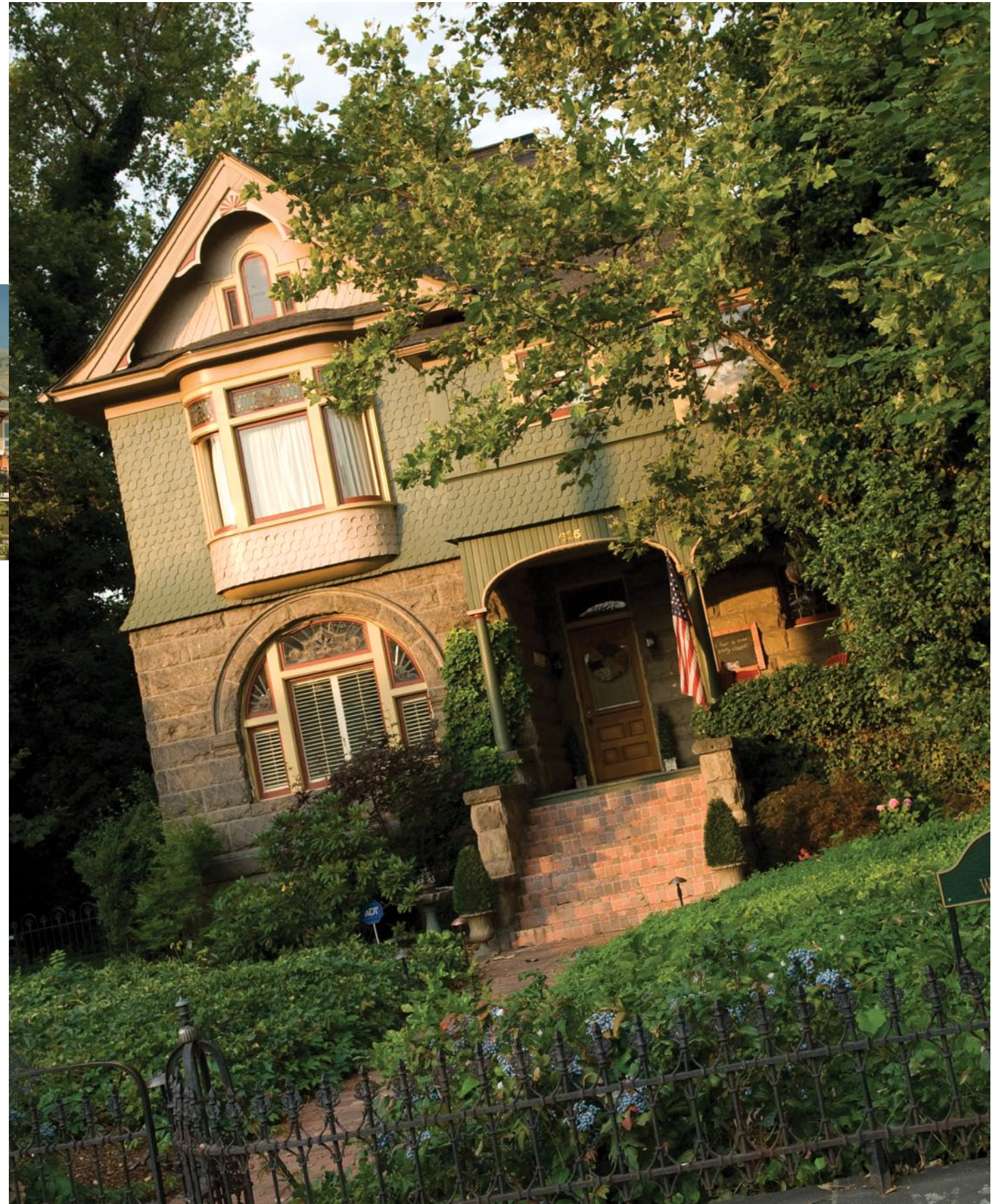
Boise residents enjoy a city in
the right place at the right time.

BY JULIE FANSELOW

Anchorage and Honolulu aside, Boise is the most remote metropolitan area in the U.S. Because of this, Idaho's capital city has evolved as a place where people create the sort of lives they want. With its blend of Rocky Mountain independence and Northwestern verve, Boise appeals to pioneering types who love being outdoors, appreciate fine food and the arts, and show the same gumption that's always been a hallmark of the West.

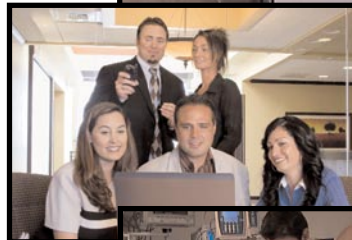
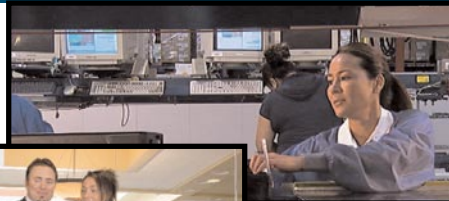
This can-do spirit infuses the houses where people live, the offices where they work, the restaurants where they eat, and the places where they congregate. "It really is difficult to find (another) place where the people are this friendly," says Ryan Perez, a widely traveled Boise native and real estate agent. "I think it's because people love where they live."

New residents find a wide range of housing choices in the Boise Valley. Suburbs such as Nampa, Meridian, Caldwell, and Eagle offer cozy country homes and palatial new developments. Eagle and Meridian are particularly fertile, offering many of the area's "premier residential opportunities," says Phil Stifler,



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Meridian's economic excellence team leader. Businesses are finding a home in these areas, too: Nampa has a thriving industrial base and Meridian is known for medical services and the health sciences, Stifler says.

In the city, older neighborhoods including the North and East Ends and the Boise Bench offer vintage homes surrounded by tall trees. New developments such as southeast Boise's Bown Crossing combine walkable neighborhoods with low-maintenance homes.

Downtown Boise is booming as a neighborhood, too. Several hundred new downtown condos and apartments are under construction, with more planned.

It's no surprise that downtown is a focal point. Nearly 130 retailers, 90 restaurants, and 40 nightspots fill the compact district. Kären Sander, director of the Downtown Boise Association, describes downtown as a "magnet," not just for dining and shopping but also for a full calendar of varied events that bring people onto the sidewalks and streets.

Erik McLaughlin, who grew up in



Erik McLaughlin's 8th Street Wine Company is a fixture in the BoDo district.

Boise and rose to be the corporate wine buyer for Cost Plus World Market, returned six years ago. Today he owns both Bungalow, an upscale comfort-food eatery in his own Hyde Park neighborhood, and the 8th Street Wine Company in the recently developed BoDo, a former warehouse district. McLaughlin says the "healthy mix of locally owned businesses and quality national tenants" is driving downtown Boise's appeal.

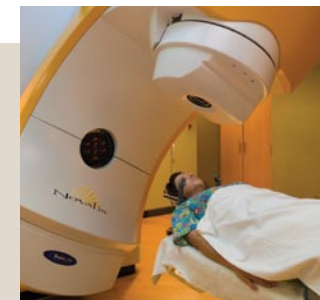
Innovation imbues Boise's office environments, too. The Banner Bank

Building opened in 2006 as the first building in Idaho to earn LEED Platinum status for its eco-friendly sustainability. George Iliff, managing principal of Colliers Idaho and chairman of the Boise Metro Chamber of Commerce's executive committee, points to a revitalization of the Sixth and Front streets intersection and the "Library Blocks" as key new developments. The latter will help link downtown with the Boise River and Boise State University.

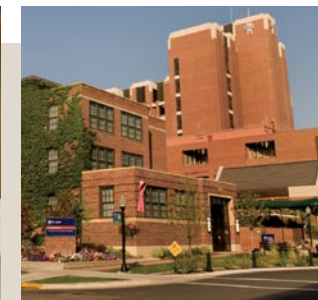
Not everyone can live in Boise, but anyone can visit. Bobbie Patterson, executive director of the Boise Convention and Visitors Bureau, says the city has direct or one-stop air service from most of the U.S. "Visitors experience the same sort of qualities that people enjoy when they live here: the recreation, the safety, the friendliness," she says.

The pink of health

When it comes to health care, some of the most progressive medicine available is found in the Boise Valley. The city's two regional medical centers and several smaller hospitals offer a broad range of specialties and provide convenient and accessible health and wellness care.



(Left) Novalis cancer-treatment equipment at St. Alphonsus; (right) St. Luke's flagship facility near downtown Boise.



Boise's first hospital, **St. Alphonsus Regional Medical Center**, was founded in 1894. Its original mission hasn't changed: to offer health care for the body, mind, and spirit of anyone in need. Today, St. Alphonsus is the region's leading trauma center. Patients who are critically ill or injured are moved by Life Flight, the area's first air medical-transport program.

St. Luke's Boise Regional Medical Center, the flagship hospital of St. Luke's Health System, was established in 1902 and is community-owned and -governed. It is home to Mountain States Tumor Institute, a full-service cancer center with locations throughout the Boise Valley. St. Luke's Children's Hospital, which includes Idaho's only pediatric intensive-care unit, is across the street from the Ronald McDonald House.

St. Luke's also has facilities in Meridian, Nampa, and elsewhere in southern Idaho.

St. Luke's is recognized for one of Boise's signature events, the St. Luke's Women's Fitness Celebration, one of the largest all-female events in the country. About 15,000 participants are expected to pack the streets of downtown Boise at this year's event. A 5K run/walk on September 22 will begin in front of the Capitol building and end on a stretch known as Tuxedo Row.

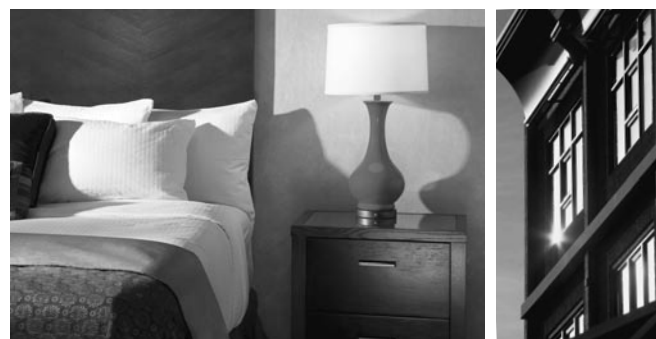
Other medical centers in the area include Mercy Medical Center in Nampa and West Valley Medical Center in Caldwell. Southwest Idaho Advanced Care Hospital is due to open in Boise in 2008.

—Sydney Sallabanks

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