

2012 Smart Growth Grow Smart Awards Announced

by Jeanne Huff

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McCall-Donnelly High School is one of this year's Grow Smart award recipients for renovating and expanding a former elementary/high school building, for keeping the high school downtown and for re-using materials from the former building in the renovation. Photo courtesy of Design West Architects

In December 1996, the Bullitt Foundation, a group dedicated to moving the Pacific Northwest toward a sustainable future, convened a group in Boise to talk about planning for growth with Idaho activists and community leaders. That was the beginning of what would become Idaho Smart Growth. Initially a project of the Palouse Clearwater Environmental Institute, in 2000 it was incorporated as a separate nonprofit.

Idaho Smart Growth recognizes and promotes individuals, companies and communities in Idaho for embracing smart growth principles and putting them into action. Those principles include developing new or existing housing with walkable neighborhoods; mixed land uses; transportation choices including bicycling; reuse of existing land and structures, and

more. Smart growth fosters vibrant, livable downtowns and city cores, prevents urban sprawl, and promotes mixed-use development and live/work communities. It is a call-to-arms movement that hearkens to our past.

"People want walkable communities where you can bike or walk to work," said Rachel Winer, Idaho Smart Growth executive director. "If you go back to the 1950s and 60s, neighborhoods were designed where you could walk to the grocery store or to school."

Winer's organization annually recognizes smart growth initiatives. This year, eight projects and one individual are getting awards. It's an increase over last year's recipients, likely due to the 25 percent increase in applicants – a sign the economy and urban development are coming back, Winer said.

"Smart growth is really what makes our communities great places to live. Transportation and housing choices that are near jobs, shops and schools makes for strong communities and successful neighborhoods. These award winners are excellent on-the-ground examples in communities throughout Idaho," Winer said.

In addition to this year's award recipients, the jury added an honorable mention, recognizing the Boise School District "for taking the initiative to remodel two elementary schools – Roosevelt and Lowell – and keep them in their existing neighborhoods," said Winer.

Jury members evaluated the nominees' use of smart growth principles. Members this year include: Jenah Thornborrow, Garden City development services administrator; Melissa Lavitt, dean, College of Social Sciences and Public Affairs, Boise State University; Stan Cole, architect, Urban Land Institute; Kate Eldridge, Idaho Smart Growth board member and vice president for HDR Engineering, Inc.; Bill Connors, CEO, Boise Metro Chamber of Commerce; Jim Tomlinson, Tomlinson and Associates; Daren Fluke, president, Idaho Chapter of the American Planning Association; Maureen Gresham, program development team, transportation performance, Idaho Transportation Department; Russ Dane, realtor, Ada County Association of Realtors and Jeremy Grimm, Planning and Community Development director, City of Sandpoint.

A special award ceremony is slated for Thursday, Nov. 8, 5 to 7:30 p.m. at the Grove Hotel.

Event sponsors are Idaho Power and Idaho Business Review.

Early bird tickets are priced at \$34; \$45 after Oct. 12. Click on this link for tickets:

<http://www.regonline.com/Register/Checkin.aspx?EventId=1139831>

Read in-depth stories about this year's recipients featured in a publication in the Nov. 9 IBR.

Idaho Smart Growth 2012 Grow Smart Award Recipients

Northwest Bank Commercial/Industrial Award: the Biomark Building in Boise. The building was redeveloped, improving and rejuvenating the site and Boise's cultural district.

D.L. Evans Bank Redevelopment Award: Idaho State Capitol in Boise. The building was saved and the look of the structure was preserved. Bicycle parking also was improved.

McClendon Engineering, Inc. Public Policy and Planning Award: Blueprint Boise. With input from the community, the City of Boise adopted a citywide comprehensive plan that incorporates smart growth principles.

Green Remodeling Smart Growth and Green Building Award: McCall-Donnelly High School. By renovating and expanding a former elementary/high school building, the high school remained downtown. In addition, many materials from the former building were re-used in the renovation.

Midas Gold Inc. Small Community Award: McCall Lakefront / Legacy Park and 2010 Improvement Project. The project revitalized a city park, enhanced public access to Payette Lake, and added interpretive panels, street lighting, sidewalks, pathways and more, creating a downtown focal point.

Givens Pursley LLP Residential Award: Crescent Rim in Boise. A condominium development was built within walking distance of the city park system, the greenbelt, the arts and the downtown core, using many green-building elements.

PacificSource Citizen Advocacy Award: Moscow Active Living Task Force. This project laid the foundation for the City of Moscow to become an increasingly healthier community through education and support of all modes of transportation, including non-motorized options, and provided policies and programs to support active lifestyles.

HDR Inc. Smart Growth and Transportation Award: Boise State University Sustainable Transportation. Created increased campus housing choices and more transportation alternatives, including more walkways and bicycle paths and "complete streets" – roadways that accommodate all users (motorized vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians), making sure streets can be safely used by everyone.

Charles Hummel Award: Stephen Meyer, Coeur d'Alene. The Charles Hummel Award recognizes leaders exemplary in dedication to and implementation of smart growth principles, reflecting a respect for place as well as for design and function. Among other accomplishments, Meyer is a partner in Parkwood Business Properties real estate development firm in Couer d'Alene and also is a partner in the Jefferson Building and Crescent Rim developments in Boise. He was chair of the Kootenai County Planning Commission for about 10 years and now serves on the board of the Hayden Lakes Urban Renewal Agency.

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