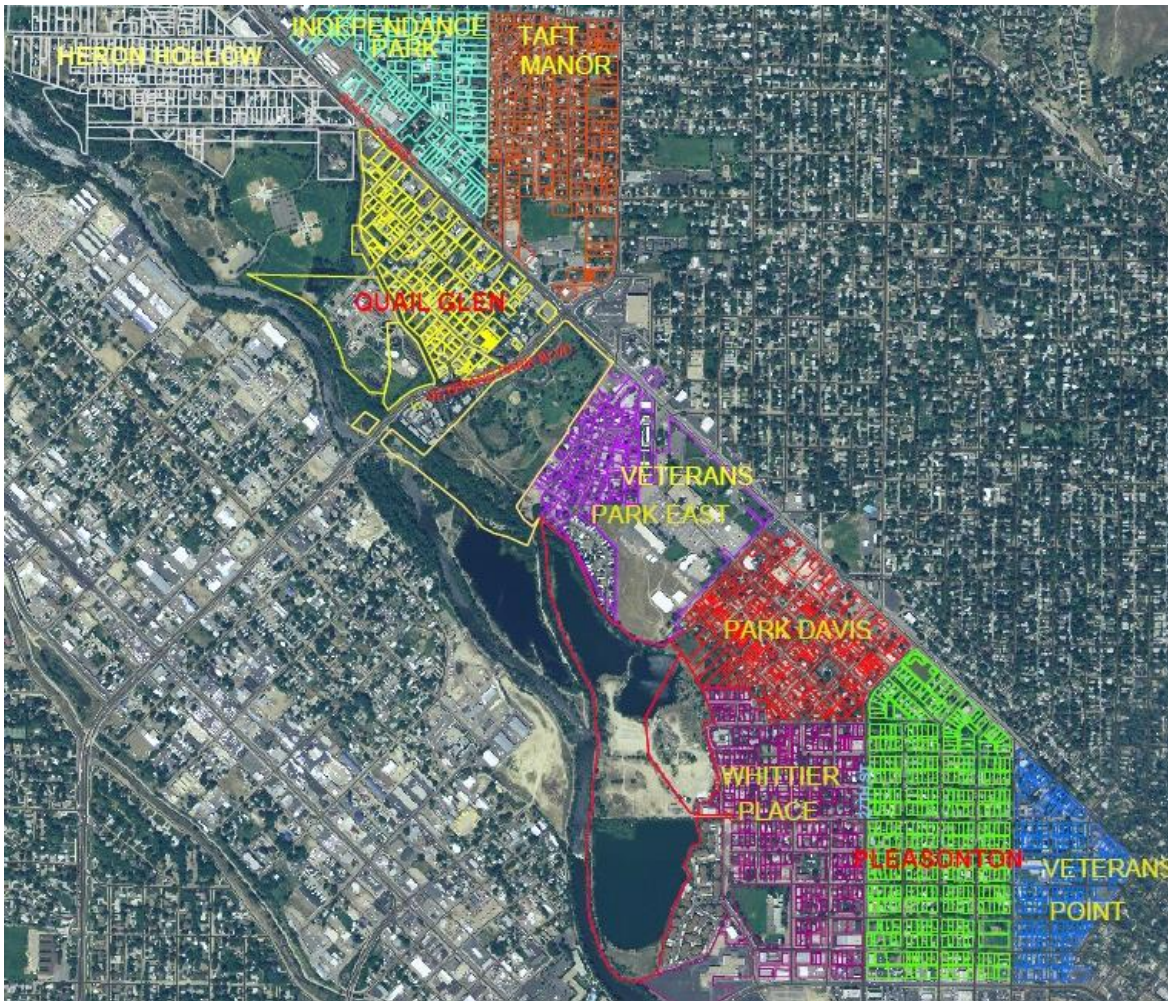


## VPNA: YOUR NEIGHBORS, YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD!

You might have heard of us but not know what we're about. Simply put, Veterans Park Neighborhood Association (VPNA) is about... helping our neighbors. Not just lending a hand to a neighbor next door, but helping all of our neighbors together to make this one of the best places to live in Boise. This is how it works: Since we started in 1991, we've secured grant money from both the city and from other organizations to pay for improvements throughout the neighborhood. Like, improvements to Quinn's Pond, a historical interpretive trail, public art works, a community garden, and new playground equipment at Taft Elementary. Whenever there have been plans afoot that brought about changes to the area, we have been a part of that process, looking out for our residents to make sure these changes will be positive. With input from residents, we helped assist with the design of Ester Simplot Park, and worked with ACHD to help ensure big road projects such as Whitewater Park Boulevard were designed with the community's interest at heart. And on the fun side, we've hosted many community- building events, to help bring people together to celebrate our neighborhood.

So now where we need YOUR help. What would you like to see happen in your neighborhood? Are there projects you think could improve it? Do you have any concerns? Please e-mail your ideas to [Vpnaboise@gmail.com](mailto:Vpnaboise@gmail.com) or check our website at <http://www.vpnaboise.org>. And by all means, be involved if you wish. Our board meetings are open to the public and we often have open positions on our board. Alternately, you can get involved in one project that's important to you.

Please join us for our **Annual Meeting, on Monday, April 18<sup>th</sup> at 6:30-8:00 PM at Whittier Elementary** (29<sup>th</sup> and Idaho Streets.) Come meet your neighbors, and learn about what is happening in the neighborhood.



This is a reference map of our neighborhood. We are divided into nine sub-districts shown. In addition, VPNA has recently expanded its borders to include the area south of Main Street (not shown on this map.) Our board includes representatives from each sub district- and we especially need representation from the western sections!

**BOARD ELECTIONS 2016:** Be involved with your community!

We are seeking new volunteers to be on our board. We meet just once a month (except December) for an hour and a half. The open positions are:

- Treasurer: keeper of VPNA finances, including tracking incoming grant money and our own general bank account, plus submission of annual tax records. WE have very few transactions each year.
- Secretary: The official "note taker" of the board meetings.
- Sub neighborhood representatives: Residents of Whittier Place, Quail Glen, Taft Manor, or Independence Park, (see map) be the "eyes and ears" of their area, and come to our meetings and give us your input!

Being on the board is a low pressure way to get involved in your community and meet your neighbors! Please join us!

You can read more about VPNA at [www.vpnaboise.org](http://www.vpnaboise.org) and [www.facebook.com/vpnaboise](https://www.facebook.com/vpnaboise).

#### WHAT WE HAVE DONE: NEWS AND UPDATES IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD!

Take a drive down Whitewater Park Boulevard, and you will notice a brand new stainless steel sculpture sitting in the roundabout. This sculpture, called the Water Chute, was designed by a local artist named Dirk Anderson. However, it is the culmination of five years of design work and approval that was originally spearheaded by the Veterans Park Neighborhood Association. The city awarded us a grant for public art that would be installed in conjunction with the opening of the roadway. The grant program awards neighborhoods like ours with cash for public improvement projects to help the community. In the past, city grant money has paid for improvements to Quinn's pond, a historic walking interpretive tour, paving of alleyways, and improvements to Veterans Memorial Park. ! Meanwhile, plans are in the works for improvements to Fairview Park, and for an "Art Wall boundary" at Whittier Elementary bordering Whitewater Park Boulevard. Do you have ideas for things in our neighborhood that could be funded? Let us know your ideas!

Veterans Park Neighborhood Association has also hosted two very successful social events over the past year. With the help of NeighborWorks, a local organization who helps with low income housing, we had an ice cream and barbecue social for National Night Out last August. We served hundreds of happy children and adults who came for the free ice cream, burgers and hot dogs. Meanwhile, in late June, the city of Boise hosted a movie night in Veterans Park that drew hundreds of fans- prizes were raffled, refreshments were served, and local families had a great night. Stay tuned for more events being planned for next summer!

At our summer Neighborhood night out, our board members and NeighborWorks volunteers made many happy children at the Park Davis Apartment complex.

#### **Esther Simplot Park in final stages of construction**

The ponds are dug, the island built, the beach has its new sand. But that's not all that's happening these days at the long-awaited Esther Simplot Park.





On a recent sunny spring morning, workers from several sub-contractors were swarming over the 55-acre site, paving the new Greenbelt path and putting finishing touches on restrooms, shelters, a vehicular bridge and a non-traditional playground.

A channel connecting Quinn's Pond to the newly created Esther's Pond is done. Fishing docks, a dive site and the bridge to Friendship Island are completed. A boardwalk running through wetlands on the east side of Esther's Pond is also finished. The park's new ponds have been allowed to fill up gradually over the past several weeks. Paving of roads and sidewalks will start later this month.



Excluding landscaping, construction of the park -- which began more than year ago -- is about 80 percent completed, said landscape architect Wendy Larimore, Boise's park development coordinator.

Landscaping is expected to be finished in June. The newly planted grass, plants, bushes and trees are unlikely to be ready to withstand the onslaught of visitors until the fall, delaying the park opening.



Larimore will provide a full update on the park on April 18 at the annual general meeting of the Veterans Park Neighborhood Association. She will also talk about the city's plans to allow early access to the Greenbelt from the western end of W. Pleasanton Avenue before the official park opening.



VETERANS PARK  
NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

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## **CHANGES COMING TO STATE STREET AND VETERANS PARKWAY**

Plans are in the works to transform the intersection of State Street and Veterans Memorial Parkway. With the volume of traffic increasing, ACHD engineers felt that the area needed a redesign. Pedestrian/vehicle accidents and a lack of crossings also helped prompt the change. The plans were three years in the making, and over 20 proposals were brought forward before ACHD adopted a finalized plan. This plan involved several compromises. Among the changes are:

- Signalized pedestrian crossings at all 4 corners of the State Street and Veterans Boulevard intersections.
- Signalized two stage crossings (staggered crosswalks at the medians) located at Clover Drive, Arthur Street, and across from the entrance to Veterans Park.
- Dedicated U-turn Lanes located eastbound one block east of Veterans Boulevard, and for westbound drivers, 1 block north of Veterans. This should alleviate some concern for eastbound drivers accessing Albertsons, or northbound drivers accessing Mercer Street.
- Bike lanes on both sides of State street and Veterans Boulevard- there is currently no bike lane on the west side of Veterans, and State Street offers riders only a shoulder.
- Some of the controversial aspects involved the raised medians at 36<sup>th</sup> Street across from Taft Elementary School. The raised median will allow left turns into Albertsons, but will no longer allow drivers to cross 36<sup>th</sup> from Anderson Street and the school, nor turn left onto Anderson Street heading north on 36<sup>th</sup>.
- A raised median across from Clover Drive, allowing for easier pedestrian crossings, but restricting left turns from Clover Drive.
- A third north-west bound left turn lane added to Veterans Memorial boulevard
- Four planned bus stop locations.

Construction on this project is slated to begin in late 2017. ACHD is currently in the process of acquiring the necessary right of ways. For more details, and a map of the proposal, visit the ACHD website:

<http://www.achdidaho.org/projects/PublicProject.aspx?ProjectID=240> or attend our annual meeting on April 18<sup>th</sup>, where ACHD reps will be on hand with maps and additional information.

