

# SIMPLOT OFFICE BUILDING

## Boise, Idaho

### 1) Urban Context and conformance with the River Myrtle Masterplan

The proposed project is part of a larger development on the block between 9th and 11th, and Myrtle and Front Street. By responding to existing context, and by filling the current void space with new urban fabric, the new development bridges between the adjacent neighborhoods and creates new hubs of activity and places of interest that will complement the existing community fabric in the city.

The proposed project is a new office building on the same site as a private institutional development Jack's Urban Meeting Place (JUMP) already under way. The overall site design locates the proposed new office building mass to the block perimeter, thereby creating a new publicly accessible open space; this interior park setting will become a new urban resource with multiple community constituencies/uses and pedestrian connection points. The JUMP project is located at the center of the site; and the park in turn is located in the 'center of gravity' of the Broadway-Chinden connector. This new attraction helps to break down the "barrier-like" character the connector has due to the heavy traffic flow on its boundary streets.

The location of the proposed office building on the park perimeter allows the new building to protect outdoor pedestrian uses from the heavy traffic on Front Street.

The **River Myrtle Masterplan** also encourages building designs that break down mega structures into a series of building masses that are more *human scaled and less monumental*.

The proposed design organizes the overall bulk of the building internal functional program requirements into two separate structures; the main office building between 11th and 10th Street, and a conference annex between 10th and 9th Street. The office building and the annex are connected by a pedestrian bridge on the 4th and 5th level. The ROW opening on 10th street is maintained as outdoor pedestrian space, allowing foot traffic connectivity on axis with 10th Street. The JUMP building, as a new institution for Boise, is properly framed in this street prospect and view corridor.

Each of the separate buildings is further articulated to achieve a small scale breakdown of mass, bulk and scale; which will relate the larger structures to the urban context and pedestrian scale of the core city. Also, it will provide an interesting background for people using the outdoor spaces in the park.

On 11th Street, the corner of the building is opened up with a passage way to allow pedestrians to access the park. This also breaks up the massing of the building along the sidewalk and provides additional opportunities for retail type interactions and outdoor areas of interest along the sidewalk zone at a pedestrian level.

As previously approved for the site, the Pioneer Path Walkway is fully realized as intended in the master plan - and leads right through the middle of the park. The new annex building reinforces the Pioneer Path and the pedestrian activities by adding a proposed new restaurant with outdoor dining. This will help connect activities between BODO via the Pioneer Path, the Event Lawn at the corner of 9th and Front Street with JUMP and the park.

The proposed development includes a widened sidewalk along Front Street, with an 8 foot parkway protecting a min. 8 foot wide sidewalk. While making every effort to protect the calm pedestrian oriented park, the proposed building nevertheless is 'transparent' for pedestrian traffic in the north south direction on 10th street, and on the corner of 11th and Front Streets.

The proposed office building eliminates all surface parking that would be associated with this project and will provide publicly accessible open space, as well as institutional uses. As a corporate headquarter, it will provide places of work for nearly 1,000 people, and will contribute to the vitality of the Connector area, as well as to the adjacent urban neighborhoods.

A below grade parking garage is under construction and will eventually cover (practically) the entire site. All above grade areas are either developed as buildings or used for publicly accessible open space / park.

The overall site design creates safe and convenient routes for walking and bicycling, as well as connectivity with an already existing and expanding alternative infrastructure for Boise's transportation needs.

The **River Myrtle Masterplan** is suggesting both an office emphasis (*areas where office uses are concentrated that also may have retail, restaurants, lodging and convention or conference facilities....*) as well as an institutional emphasis (*areas where government offices are concentrated such as the ADA County Courthouse Corridor that also may have offices, retail, restaurants.....*). The proposed project is providing office use along the heavy

travelled Front Street corridor; this new building, in turn, protects a more institutional use on the remainder of the site, in the publicly accessible park, as well as in the JUMP project already underway.

The **River Myrtle Masterplan** specifically focuses on an activated ground level and people oriented design. The building design achieves this primarily by creating generous openings/entrances into the park; as well as designing the exterior, lower level of the buildings in the small scale rhythm of existing downtown storefronts.

The design plans on a series of display locations adjacent to the sidewalk which are part of a larger tractor exhibit over the entire development/block. Finally, the annex building will include a ground floor restaurant, presenting a friendly and inviting face towards downtown.

Given the building program, and considering the car dominated character of Front Street that close to the freeway, we seek the DR boards input and suggestions in how to best design the ground level street frontage on Front Street to best promote the urban goals of pedestrian friendliness and walk-ability.

According to the **River Myrtle Masterplan**, the site is scheduled to hold buildings between 7 and 9 stories in height. The proposed project is 9 stories tall.

## 2) **Urban Context and conformance with the Zoning Code**

*Per the Zoning Code, the ground floor of new buildings is required to be designed to accommodate pedestrian friendly elements. Additionally, at least seventy percent (70%) of the building's ground level, street facing facade(s) is to be constructed to abut and be oriented to a public sidewalk or plaza.*

The entire proposed building is, with the street facing facade, abutting either a newly created sidewalk or plaza on the ground level.

The ground floor of the structure is designed to create visual interest by either creating direct pedestrian use (restaurant, building entry lobby, retail type functions, and exhibition areas), or is designed as a storefront type exterior along the pedestrian routes.

The sidewalk along front street shall be a minimum of 16 feet wide in total, with an 8 foot wide parkway protecting a min. 8 foot wide sidewalks. The sidewalk along 11th street is a total of 12 foot min. wide.

The sidewalk and parkway design, as well as the locations of street trees, street lighting and street amenities, reflects CCDC standards.

### **3. Building Design and Compliance with Downtown Design Guidelines**

The proposed building design promotes an original interpretation of the design guidelines core agenda, to

- a. *Integrate design techniques that distinguish a buildings' top, middle, and bottom on all buildings at least three-stories in height.*

The proposed design employs a design technique of "stacked boxes". The lower set of boxes provides a very clear base zone for the building to connect to the streets; these volumes are articulated with pedestrian friendly amenities or design features. The middle box encloses the bulk of interior space in the building, and the highest box sits lightly on top of the other boxes to complete the "box stack" to the sky.

This design provides a multitude of different angles to view the project, and will provide an ever changing appearance to people moving around the building's exterior.

The roofline is articulated through the sheer nature of the "stacked boxes" design, providing a varying and articulated skyline. The highest portions of the building will be surrounded by a screen wall simulating and extending the top boxes' skin, which will then become even more transparent against the sky (which allows the building to fade into the sky) while visually shielding the required MEP equipment.

On the annex building, the top 'box' will be articulated to be "floating" and also transparent while surrounding a green house and ancillary spaces. This will visually articulate SIMPLOT's motto "to bring earth's resources to life" to the visitors arriving from downtown; at night this space will be lit to provide a 'beacon' that articulates this very special new landmark for Boise.

- b. *Larger buildings need more substantial articulated/modulated features to break up the massing and add visual interest. Building facades wider than 130 feet shall break up the building's perceived massing and add visual interest. One suggested way to do this is to design the building such that the*

*façade employs building walls with contrasting articulation that make it appear like two distinct buildings.*

The proposed design articulates the building as a series of "stacked boxes", with "infill tissue" bridging the gap between them. Each stack can be read as a separate vertical building with volumetric differentiation to the adjacent stack; or, the individual volumes can also be seen as simply articulating and breaking down the larger whole structure. The building is intended to appear as both - a cohesive corporate headquarter building, as well as an articulated ensemble that seamlessly integrates with the smaller scale Boise context.

The proposed building is complying with the restrictions in tower width above the 6th floor or 180 feet, as well as with the minimum tower street setback above the 6th floor of 10 foot minimum.

The building design fully intends to create a lively, walkable street frontage with facade articulations that create a design pattern akin to small storefronts. Details in this regard will be shown in future DR packages.

The maximum width of unbroken exterior wall of 130 feet is exceeded by small amounts (the widest face is about 140 feet). However, we seek a variance from this requirement due to the fact that the building design achieves a high level of articulation adequate for a building located on these busy arterials, while maintaining design logic and integrity.

The proposed building is highly integrated with the park. The design features a pedestrian passage into the park on the corner of 11th and Front street. It is there that the main entrance is located, with a prominent entry off Front street, as well as entrances from the passage and from the park. This entrance situation is articulated by a special tractor exhibit box, as a feature showcase of the tractor exhibits that are leading throughout the entire complex.

All roof top MEP equipment will be surrounded by vertical screen that will continue the design language of the exterior building walls.

All visible roof areas will either be accessible and paved, or green roofs will be used to cover exposed roofing membrane.