

A New Vision for Downtown Pocatello with Landscape Architect, Todd Johnson

Abby Stewart

05/11/2020

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Pause and notice the key items in your community. *What makes people visit, stay, engage with the town?* Todd Johnson, USU's Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning practitioner in residence tunes in with us today, along with graduate student Jim Anglesey, to answer these questions. Todd helps fulfill USU extension mission, by identifying *what makes communities special?* And then creates visions of what that community should look like. The degradation of a community happens in many small moments over time. Suddenly, a once busy city center is quiet and dilapidated. On the other hand, this is how improvements happen too. Small, incremental changes build up to create the cities you know and love. But how can you go from one to the other? In this episode, we look to the Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning Department for insights on what the future of Pocatello may look like.

Jim Anglesey is a grad student finishing up his masters in LAEP while also serving as an Assistant Planner for the city of Pocatello, Idaho. With his degree, he wanted to

make a difference in his hometown, which has often been overlooked for the more up-and-coming Idaho Falls. With Pocatello city, he is helping put together their 20-year plan, which includes highlighting the historic buildings, building in empty spots, and bringing the Portneuf river back to life. But why did people leave the city center in the first place? In the 60s, 70s, and 80s, people started moving to the suburbs. In Pocatello's case, this meant out towards Chubbuck, where the newly constructed mall was. As suburban living became more popular, this resulted in the degradation of the downtown properties as well as an uptick in crime rates. The final straw in Pocatello's case was the tearing down of the Bannock hotel. After this, people started realizing the value of the city center, and



the downtown was

soon named a historic district.

At USU, his advisor, LAEP professor Todd Johnson, cites Idaho Falls as an example of successful urban planning to revitalize a city. His brother was part of the LAEP department when they started planning for Idaho Falls in the 80s. They focused on promoting downtown living, making it livable and walkable, and allowing independent businesses to thrive. Now, people will make the extra half-hour drive to Idaho Falls, passing entirely through Pocatello. He and Jim are determined to change this. USU has been vital in the development of these cities, as Land management and environmental planning are part of USU's land-grant mission. Changes can be hard for communities, which is why researchers like Tom and Jim are so important. Their plans and love for the places they help will help communities create places with unique identities that people will want to be a part of.

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Todd was born in Willmar, Minnesota in 1952 into a family with two older brothers. his oldest brother taught landscape architecture at USU for 42 years. Todd received his undergraduate degree in LAEP in 1976 from USU, attended Harvard University in 1980 and received his masters degree in 1982. Todd has practiced professionally in landscape architecture since 1976 and been a partner in two successful design practices with national/international reputations. Todd's teaching interests are in the studio

practice of design for landscape architecture urban design and planning.

"I am interested in design teaching methods specifically tailored to a creative studio environment that encourages accelerated learning and critical thinking. Entrepreneurship originates in business practices, when blended with design process methods this pairing creates powerful design outcomes. Teaching this awareness how these methods can be employed in Studio Culture is of great interest."

