

Thursday, January 1, 2009 16:27 MST

IDAHO BUSINESS REVIEW

ADVERTISING? | CLASSIFIEDS | GOT A TIP? | TOP LIST | [PAST SUBSCRIBER SURVEY](#)

| [RETURN TO HOME](#)

➔ [WANT THREE FREE ISSUES?](#)

➔ [Daily e-mail updates](#)

➔ [Real Estate e-mail updates](#)

RSS 2.0

[CONTACT US](#) at 208.336.3768

[SEARCH ARCHIVES](#)

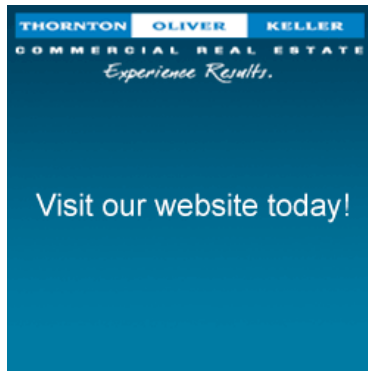
See stories on: [Idaho Companies](#) [Idaho Industries](#) [Idaho People](#)

This Week's Edition

8th Street remodel re-invigorates marketplace

POSTED: Monday, December 1, 2008

by Dani Grigg



The 8th Street Marketplace in downtown Boise has undergone a transformation.

The \$1.5 million interior renovation and new exterior signage aims to unify the various entities under an updated but classic aesthetic.

Developer Ephraim Greenwall of San Francisco-based Talcott Holdings

purchased the property about 18 months ago and partnered with Erstad Architects of Boise and Guho Corp. of Eagle to turn the building around. Greenwall said he reached outside of California on this project because everything in his neighborhood was "overblown, overheated and uninteresting," leaving only "noneconomical" development options. He said he found Boise to be a tremendous opportunity for several reasons: it has a burgeoning cultural scene, two major medical campuses and a large national university, as well as technological promise based on its history of creative startups.

And he said the 8th Street Marketplace has the potential to capture that atmosphere of promise.

"At one point the 8th Street Marketplace was the place to be," he said.

"After it opened, 25 years followed where the population spread out and this area became a shadow of its former self."

He said the marketplace became a dark hodgepodge filled with vacancies and unhappy tenants bearing the burden of 30 years of deferred maintenance.

The new design aims to encourage a sense of well-being for tenants and visitors.

"When Ephraim asked us to get involved, our whole approach was to reestablish it as a hub of energy, to redefine what retail imagery is all about," said Andrew Erstad, president of Erstad Architects, whose firm contributed to the development under project manager Tegan Bohanan. They removed stylized railings and dated color schemes, neutralizing storefront designs but keeping the "bare bones" of the historic building visible. They upgraded the building to current code while keeping elements that would have a visual impact out of sight lines.

"I think when you approach design with very simple expression and simple details, the building falls into the background and the tenants become the primary focus," Erstad said.

Greenwall said art and architecture tend to drive commerce.

"An abundance of light, height of ceilings, pastel color schemes, clean consistent application of materials and design... and functional art appear to attract talented workers, increase their efficiency and improve their job satisfaction," he said. "There is nothing profound here. It is common sense. Employees and business owners who enjoy the environment where they are working feel better about what they are doing and, most importantly, communicate this sense of well being and enthusiasm to clients and fellow workers."

He said the chandeliers and signage in the marketplace are examples of functional art.

The remodel aims to attract what Greenwall called the "creative professional class:" designers, advertising agencies, technology businesses, architects, engineers, media groups, photography/art studios and travel businesses, as well as businesses to support those groups and the nonprofit community.

Article Tools

[Printer friendly edition](#)



[E-mail this to a friend](#)



[RSS Feed](#)



[Digg this story](#)



[Add to Del.icio.us](#)



Current tenants include restaurants, retail, a couple nonprofit organizations, a law firm, technology companies and more. A Gandolfo's New York Delicatessen will occupy the Maggie Moo's space in February. Downtown Boise retail vacancy is at 11.69 percent, compared to an Ada County average of 11.07 percent, a low of 6.96 percent in west Boise and a high of 24.36 percent in the airport submarket, according to the Thornton Oliver Keller October month-end report. Canyon County retail vacancy is 9.36 percent.

"A slight increase in vacancy was anticipated, but the jump to nearly 11 percent was unexpected," the report stated. "Absorption was significantly lower in the 3rd quarter and although year-to-date net absorption remains positive, it is 60 percent below last year's pace. Over the course of 2008, projected supply has increased from 10 months to 28 months."

Leave a comment

Name:

Email:

You have 8000 characters left.

Submit Comment



**Commenters, let's maintain a civil discussion here.
Please observe the following guidelines:**



1. Do not use profanity or euphemisms for profanity.
2. Do not personally attack or bait other commenters.
3. Express your own views; don't just argue for argument's sake.
4. Sarcasm doesn't work on the Web. Either avoid it or clearly label it so you aren't misinterpreted.
5. Don't make the same point repetitively.
6. No spam. Link to a commercial site only if it's relevant to the discussion.
7. Putting your name on your comments increases their value and credibility. However, if you must conceal your identity, please choose one pseudonym and stick to it. No "sock puppets."