

## APFY2026-0001 JOINT COMMENTS TO DRAFT 5

We the undersigned residents of Garden City, identified by name and address, hereby oppose adoption of Draft 5 of SAPFY2026-0001. We reside in the Waterfront District neighborhood adjacent to the area designated as "Heron Commons" by the proposed SAP Ordinance. Our main concern is that the current proposal fails to implement the Garden City Comprehensive Plan by failing to provide additional river frontage access to the public and failing to provide transition and compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood. Many of us have provided comments and testimony regarding previous Drafts and recognize positive changes have been made in response. We believe that further improvements must be made to ensure Heron Commons becomes, and eastern Garden City remains, a desirable place to live, work and recreate.

### 1. Provide Additional River Frontage Access to the Public

At present, public river frontage access within the proposed SAP area is limited to the greenbelt path which runs between the river bank and the ACHD maintenance yard. There is little or no usable area between the greenbelt and river due to the steepness of the river bank. The proposed SAP speaks in intent, purpose and general provisions about public park and open areas, connectivity and riverfront adjacency development standards to increase or improve public access and use of the riverfront. But none of those elements appear to require or significantly incentivise the provision of anything other than private, but somewhat publicly accessible, development along the existing greenbelt. These elements should be improved or strengthened as follows:

A. Public park and open space requirements should be concentrated along the riverfront to provide a broad usable public space between the river and any inland private development. A continuation of something like Heron Park should be supported by requirements, incentives or public funding. Allowing public park and open space to be scattered across the SAP, does little to provide additional public access to the riverfront.

B. Require significant building setback and height limitations from the greenbelt or public space along the river corridor as applicable. A 50' setback and a height limit of 2 stories, increasing incrementally up to 4 stories within 100' of the setback area would be reasonable. Notably there are no buildings along the greenbelt corridor in the proposed Heron Commons area such that any development will tend to narrow and isolate the river corridor.

C. The Boise River Greenbelt Adjacency Design standards should be improved by changing overall applicability from 60' to 150', establishing a 50' building setback and height limitations of 2 stories with horizontal stepbacks increased from 10' to 20' up to a maximum of 4 stories.

## 2. Provide Transition and Compatibility to the Surrounding Neighborhood.

Though the Garden City Comprehensive Plan specifically directs that development of the ACHD area provide a transition in height and scale and compatibility to the surrounding neighborhood, the proposed SAP does not establish any minimum standards to ensure such transition or compatibility. Instead, the proposed SAP provides a narrative standard for providing compatibility. We strongly believe that actual minimum standards must be provided as follows:

A. Require a setback of 20' from the Heron Commons property boundary with the Waterfront District neighborhood. Existing residences along that boundary are generally set back 20' or more. Establish a height limitation of 3 stories and 40' within 150' of that property boundary. Residences within the Waterfront District are 1, 2 and 3 stories and do not exceed 40' in height. Providing these setback and height limitations will provide a reasonable transition from the Waterfront District to the significantly higher buildings (6 plus stories) otherwise allowed in Heron Commons by the proposed SAP.

B. The Residential Adjacency standards in the proposed SAP should recognize and specifically include language requiring a "transition in height and scale" as provided for by the Garden City Comprehensive Plan.

## 3. Adams Street Connection

Limit any connection from Adams Street at 37th Street and Adams Street within the Waterfront District to a pathway for bicycle and pedestrian use only.

## 4. Regulatory Master Plan

Provide that procedures to approve a Regulatory Master Plan include a hearing with public comment and testimony and decision making by City Council.

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| <u>S/S</u> | Gwen P. Fransen                              |
| <u>S/S</u> | <u>Curt A. Fransen</u>                       |
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