

September 4, 2026

Garden City Hall
Development Services Department
6015 N. Glenwood Street
Garden City, Idaho 83714

RE: Comments on SAPFY2026-0001 – Draft 5 Heron Commons Specific Area Plan (SAP)

I appreciate the opportunity to offer comments and engage with the city to enhance the Heron Commons SAP. Thank you for the improved changes in the Draft 5 Ordinance.

I live in the adjacent Waterfront District (WFD) subdivision on Willowbar Lane across from the warehouses and ACHD land. I offer the following comments.

Protecting Adjacent Neighborhoods

Please help me understand. There are 5.5 pages of detail in the draft ordinance on the Pedestrian Spine. There are only 0.25 pages on Residential Adjacency. There is more detail on Public Art at 1.5 pages.

Why wouldn't you want to include detail about proper setbacks, building height, use, and density in these transition areas? And provide assurances to existing neighbors, and end controversy?

Protecting existing neighborhoods is a cornerstone of the Comprehensive Plan and clearly identified as a primary concern in public surveys, comments, and testimony. Please add provisions to do this. Sound and reasonable ideas have been offered.

Action: *Add details on setbacks, building height, use, and density in transition areas.*

Traffic

As noted in my testimony on July 15, 2026, a traffic impact study should be conducted now. Your response that a traffic study can't be done without development details, or that current zoning is mostly unlimited, does not justify opting out of this work. It's the responsible thing to do, by the applicant. Your SAP encourages density – it actually mandates it and prohibits less dense development that is allowed by current zoning.

It essentially prohibits a neighborhood like the WFD, which has served and been praised as a model mixed-use development. That's unfortunate.

Your push to mandate density triggers the need for a traffic study, which can be done without a detailed development proposal. You will find traffic problems and significant off-site transportation improvements are needed (like your process for the 23-acre Residences at River Club SAP). This may result in a desire to lessen density.

If a traffic impact study is not done now, when will it be done? There are 16 different property owners for the 25 parcels totaling 34 acres. Only six parcels are greater than one acre. There is no control on which parcels develop first. Will you have piecemeal traffic studies in this thoughtfully "planned area"? There is not one mention of "traffic study" in the Draft, now or in the future. How will this be responsibly handled? How will a developer know what to do?

Action: *Perform traffic study now.*

Adams Street Pathway

Thank you for changing this Draft to provide for only bikes and pedestrians. We support that. There is still the provision that public vehicles are okay if ACHD requires it. Why can't ACHD engage now, as part of the SAP?

This is a simple "Functional Classification" exercise to assess whether it's a good idea to link a Collector Roadway to a Local Roadway. Do a quick Google search and ask this question. Please engage ACHD now.

Action: *Consult with ACHD now for determination to prohibit traffic.*

Also please note, there is already a second emergency access to the WFD at the end of E. 35th Street (near Yardarm) that connects through the Bridge Townhomes development.

Greenbelt, Boise River, and Open Space

You really have an opportunity to do something special in the city. There are details in the Draft about the Greenbelt, Boise River, Open Space, and the Floodplain. But has anybody created a sketch or graphic or conceptual plan following all the standards provided?

I think you will find the result limiting and narrow and not what the city and the public envision. Please take your time and go through a simple charrette exercise to create a plan. Then, look to see the results and change the Draft accordingly to achieve the vision. Words and numbers on paper don't always correlate to a desired outcome.

Action: *Develop riverfront concept in compliance and then change Draft to achieve vision.*

Thank you for your consideration of my comments. I think we are actually aligned. It's just a matter of incorporating added provisions and details.

I love where I live and am not opposed to adjacent development. This is important and we want to ensure a continued livability in the area.

Sincerely,



Rod J. Linja

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