

September 30, 2026

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

*RE: Comments on SAPFY2026-0001 – Draft 6 Heron Commons Specific Area Plan (SAP)*

Thanks for the opportunity to engage. We are requesting reasonable and wise changes to improve compatibility.

**Protect Existing Neighborhoods.** Change ordinance to allow and encourage lower density uses like single family residential and open space in **adjacent existing transition zones**, especially along WFD boundary. Along WFD boundary, limit height to 40 feet, apply minimum setback of 20 feet, restrict uses like bars, restaurants, and trash collection alleys. These actions “mimic” adjacent uses.

**Do Traffic Impact Study now.** Ask yourself, if this were a coalition of private properties requesting this re-zone, would a traffic study be required? As the City is the Applicant, apply the same standard as a private developer (cost not a factor). Avoid future piecemeal traffic studies in this “Specific Area Plan”. Understand impacts of this re-zone action.

**Adams Street Connection.** Thank you for proceeding with the ACHD Master Street Map amendment process to remove this potential roadway for vehicular traffic. Make a pathway connection for bike and pedestrians only.

**Nexus to Comprehensive Plan and City Code.** Please share detail on how the SAP vision with 72-foot buildings (up to 104 feet) and high density is consistent or in compliance with the Comp Plan and City Code. This area is not TOD nor within a Neighborhood, Activity, Commercial, or Destination Center-Node-Zone (which is generally 2 to 3 stories). Looks like it is within a Main Street Concept (2 to 3 stories). Where is the leap to Mid-Urban Mixed-Use? I could envision the Comp Plan supporting 3 to 4-story buildings along Adams Street. Also, the SAP boundary is larger than the Future Planning Area in the Comp Plan.

- I have attached excerpts of draft 6 Ordinance, Staff Report 6, draft Findings of Fact, Public Survey, and Neighborhood Meeting Summary, a map request, and an email exchange with highlights and redlines of edits, comments, and questions.

Although there are many pages, I do **hope the City Council and Staff spend time, read, and consider these comments.**

As proposed, the Heron Commons is not compatible with surrounding neighborhoods, is not supported by the Comprehensive Plan, and is simply much too impactful. Please take a step back and consider real modifications. Another public meeting is in order. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Rod J. Linja, P.E.  
3796 N. Willowbar Lane  
Garden City, ID 83714

# DRAFT 6 ORDINANCE

3. Establishes a Mid Urban Mixed Use neighborhood that serves as a regionally significant destination throughout all phases of development.
4. Engages the Boise River and Boise River Greenbelt through direct interface, reclaimed riverfront land, and enhanced public access.
5. Through development and site design, leverages the Boise River corridor to create seamless physical and visual connections between the river corridor and adjacent areas, enabling the corridor's recreational, environmental, and placemaking value to permeate and infuse the surrounding neighborhood.
6. Respects the Boise River corridor's natural resources through site planning, open space, landscaping, lighting, and development patterns that support the long-term health and function of the river environment.
7. Promotes a vibrant, compact, walkable, and human-scale environment through public circulation connections, high-quality design, active frontages, integrated land uses, landscaping, and public art.
8. Creates and sustains publicly accessible open space that is functional, meaningful, and suitable for everyday use.
9. Promotes compact, appropriately scaled development of sufficient density and intensity to support market-viable development in the near term and a sustainable fiscal future for the city.
10. Provides a balanced mix of residential, commercial, office, civic, and service uses. Development that results in a predominantly single-use pattern is contrary to the intent of the district.

B. Code Intent: This development code for the Heron Commons SAP District is intended to set parameters that will result in a high-amenity, integrated neighborhood that:

1. Provides residential and non-residential uses.
2. Provides new and enhanced public spaces that offer public amenities, such as recreation opportunities, seating, gathering spaces, and interactive active art; are accessible, and integrated into the surrounding neighborhood.

THIS PROHIBITS  
A PARCEL TO  
BE DEVELOPED  
SIMILAR TO WFD  
WHICH IS "PRIMARYLY  
RESIDENTIAL".  
THAT'S SAD.  
PLEASE CHANGE,

2. The Illustrative Infrastructure Plan does not designate a conceptual location for the required Public Open Space–Future Park, emergency access to Waterfront District Subdivision, or the E. Adams Street bicycle connection. The location of the Public Open Space–Future Park shall be established through an approved Regulatory Master Plan.

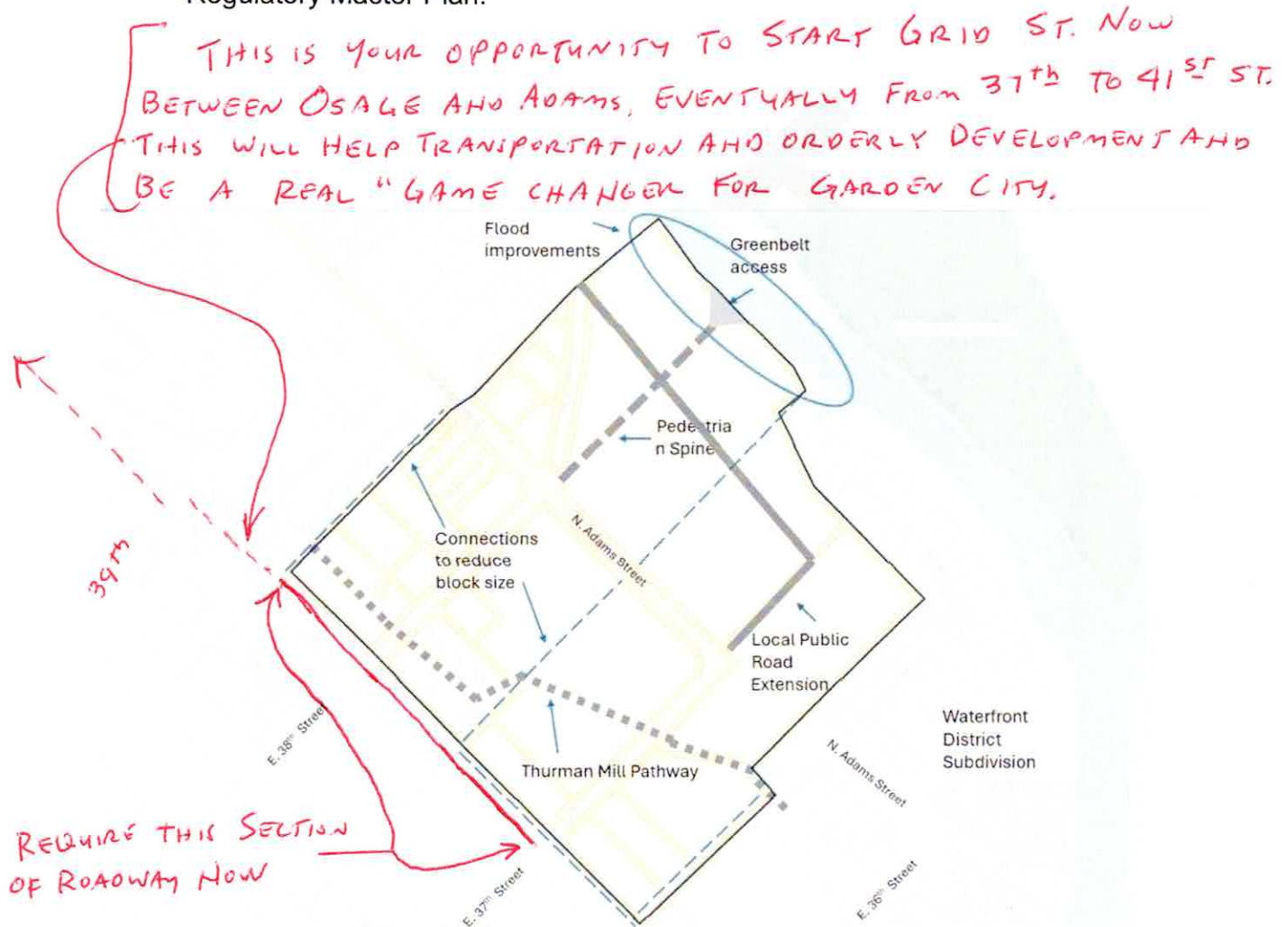


**Figure 8-8B-2.2 Illustrative Infrastructure Plan for the Heron Commons SAP District**

| Facility                            | Primary Function              | Motor Vehicles                                                  | Bikes    | Pedestrians           |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|----------|-----------------------|
| Boise River Greenbelt               | Recreation                    | No, except emergency vehicles if designed adequately            | Yes      | Yes                   |
| Primary Pedestrian Spine            | Destination Location          | Yes, but not required, and must be secondary                    | Yes      | Priority              |
| Local Circulation Network           | Public Access                 | Yes                                                             | Yes      | Yes                   |
| 38th Street Extension               | Bicycle Network Connection    | Yes, but may be limited                                         | Priority | Yes                   |
| Thurman Mill Canal Multiuse Pathway | Non- motor vehicular mobility | No, except emergency vehicles if designed adequately            | Priority | Yes                   |
| Adams Bicycle Connection            | Bicycle mobility              | No, <del>except emergency vehicles if designed adequately</del> | Priority | Dependent on proposal |

**Figure 8-8B-3.1 Street and Pathway Typology**

## 2. Boise River Greenbelt Standards

### A. Boise River Greenbelt Improvements

1. Required Facility: Any portion of the Boise River Greenbelt that is constructed, reconstructed, or modified shall remain open and accessible to the public in perpetuity, except for temporary closures permitted by Garden City Code.
2. Purpose: The purpose of the Boise River Greenbelt Standards is to protect, enhance, and ensure the long-term public benefit of the Boise River and Boise River Greenbelt as a premier community amenity. These standards are intended to prioritize public access, visibility, and enjoyment of the river corridor while preserving its environmental and recreational value.
3. Intent: The intent of these provisions is to:
  - a. Incorporate and advance the intent of **8-4M BOISE RIVER NATURAL RESOURCE**. Open space shall be planned and maintained in a manner that preserves and enhances river-related natural resources, supports floodplain and habitat functions, strengthens the Boise River Greenbelt

as a linear park system, and reinforces public access and connectivity along the Boise River corridor.

- b. Prioritize the location of open space adjacent to the Boise River and Boise River Greenbelt where feasible, reinforcing the community's connection to the river corridor and expanding access to this key regional amenity.
- c. Support the preservation and enhancement of lands along the Boise River that are appropriate for open space due to environmental considerations, including floodplain constraints and habitat value.
- d. Integrate open space with the Boise River Greenbelt system to establish the Boise River Greenbelt as a linear park rather than a limited corridor.

4. Adjacent Development: Development adjacent to the Boise River and Boise River Greenbelt shall comply with 8-8B-5(F) Boise River and Greenbelt Adjacency Design.

5. Width

- a. The overall width of the existing Boise River Greenbelt corridor shall not be reduced.
- b. Where the Boise River Greenbelt pathway is reconstructed, the paved pathway shall be restored to its pre-existing width or a minimum width of twelve feet (12'), whichever is greater.

6. Surface Material

Reconstructed Boise River Greenbelt pathways shall be constructed of concrete and meet adopted Boise River Greenbelt construction and durability standards.

7. Continuity of Access During Construction

- a. Public access along the Boise River Greenbelt shall be maintained during construction to the maximum extent practicable.
- b. If temporary closure is unavoidable, an ADA-compliant, clearly marked detour shall be provided and approved by the City prior to closure.

8. Lighting

Where lighting is installed adjacent to the Boise River Greenbelt:

ADD - ENCOURAGE  
RIVERBANK HABITAT  
RESTORATION AND  
RELOCATING A  
WIDENED GREENBELT  
FURTHER AWAY FROM  
TOP OF RIVERBANK

### 3. Maximum Block Length Standard

A. Where a block face, development frontage, or physical barrier would otherwise exceed six hundred feet (600') in length, a public connection shall be provided.

B. Required connections shall:

1. Be open and accessible to the public;
2. Provide a direct and continuous route through the block or development area;
3. Connect to a public street, public pathway, public open space, or another publicly accessible circulation facility at each end;
4. Be designed to safely accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, or both; and
5. Remain available for public use in perpetuity through public ownership, public easement, or another legal mechanism approved by the City.

4. *Alternative Design.* The review authority may approve an alternative spacing or alignment where environmental constraints, flood protection improvements, existing public access facilities, canal infrastructure, or other site conditions make strict compliance impracticable, provided the proposal achieves an equal or greater level of public connectivity.

PLEASE  
CONTACT FIRE DISTRICT NOW TO VERIFY 2<sup>ND</sup> ACCESS TO WFD OFF 35<sup>TH</sup> ST. THROUGH  
BRIDGE TOWNSHIP.

### **D. WATERFRONT DISTRICT SUBDIVISION EMERGENCY VEHICLE ACCESS**

A redundant emergency vehicle access connection to the Waterfront District Subdivision shall be provided in addition to existing emergency access that is provided by East 36th Street. Such access shall be designed and maintained to meet the requirements and approval of North Ada County Fire and Rescue District. Compliance with this requirement may be achieved through reconstruction or improvement of the Boise River Greenbelt to accommodate emergency vehicle access, a connection through the Adams Street corridor, or another alternative providing equivalent emergency access and redundancy as approved by the fire authority.

PLEASE  
ENGAGE AND  
DON'T  
WAIT.

### **F. UTILITIES**

All new utilities, including those located within adjacent public rights-of-way, shall be installed underground.

CONSIDER ADDING COLUMN FOR  
NEIGHBORHOOD TRANSITION ZONE  
ALONG WFD BOUNDARY

AC – Administrative Conditional Use Permit Required: Uses designated as AC may be approved through the Administrative with Notice Process when the proposed use and site fully comply with all applicable standards of Title 8.

C- Conditional Use Permit Required: Uses designated as CUP require discretionary approval through the Conditional Use Permit process pursuant to **8-6B-2 CONDITIONAL USE** and **8-6A ADMINISTRATION**.

blank cells – Prohibited: Uses designated as prohibited are not permitted within the district.

Table 8-8B-7-1 Use

|                                           | Property<br>subject to the<br>Boise River<br>Greenbelt<br>Adjacency<br>Standards | Property that is<br>not subject to<br>the Boise River<br>Greenbelt<br>Adjacency<br>Standards |
|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Agriculture*                              |                                                                                  | P                                                                                            |
| Amusement center*                         | P                                                                                | P                                                                                            |
| Animal care facility*                     |                                                                                  | AC                                                                                           |
| Artist studio*                            | P                                                                                | P                                                                                            |
| Bed and breakfast*                        |                                                                                  | P                                                                                            |
| Bicycle sales, service, storage, rental   | P                                                                                | P                                                                                            |
| Building material, garden, and equipment* | AC                                                                               | AC                                                                                           |
| Church or place of religious worship*     |                                                                                  | C                                                                                            |
| Commercial entertainment facility*        | C                                                                                | C                                                                                            |
| Daycare, center*                          |                                                                                  | AC                                                                                           |
| Daycare, neighborhood*                    | C                                                                                | P                                                                                            |
| Daycare, personal*                        | AC                                                                               | P                                                                                            |
| Drinking establishment, full service*     | P                                                                                | P                                                                                            |
| Drinking establishment, limited service*  | P                                                                                | P                                                                                            |
| Drive-through establishment*              |                                                                                  |                                                                                              |
| Dwelling unit, accessory*                 |                                                                                  | P                                                                                            |
| Dwelling unit, group                      |                                                                                  | P                                                                                            |
| Dwelling unit, multiple-family*           | C                                                                                | P                                                                                            |
| Dwelling unit, single-family attached     | ?                                                                                | P                                                                                            |
| Dwelling unit, single-family detached     | ?                                                                                | <del>C</del> P                                                                               |
| Dwelling unit, two-family                 | ?                                                                                | <del>C</del> P                                                                               |

RESTRICT  
CERTAIN  
USES:  
ENCOURAGE  
OTHERS  
THAT ARE  
COMPATIBLE

# STAFF REPORT 6

## PROCESS AND DECISION

### General Provisions

This application is processed by GCC 8-6A-7 Public Hearing.

### Decision Process

The following decision processes are required for the project as governed by GCC Table 8-6A-1.

| Decision         |      | Design Review<br>Consultants<br>Consultation | Recommendation Authority          | Decision Authority |
|------------------|------|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
| Specific<br>Plan | Area | Required                                     | Planning and Zoning<br>Commission | City Council       |

After hearing the evidence and considering the application, the decision maker shall make their decision. The decision maker shall report the facts upon which it based its conclusion, the ordinance and standards used in evaluating the application, the actions, if any, that the applicant could take to obtain a permit, and whether a permit is granted, granted with conditions, or denied. The decision maker shall make its findings and decision no later than by the next regular scheduled meeting.

### Required Findings

The decision maker must decide that the following findings are compliant with written reasoned statements to approve a Specific Area Plan:

1. The SAP application, as conditioned, is consistent with the city comprehensive plan, as amended, including the future land use map and the land use planning area guidelines and land use designations, if applicable.

2. The SAP application, as conditioned, meets the minimum requirements of this chapter [GCC Title 8 chapter 6].

3. The SAP application promotes the orderly planning and development of land, as set forth in the purpose of this process.

4. The SAP application will create a district that is identifiable as a distinct area of the city with a distinguishing character.

5. The SAP application has been noticed and a public hearing held in accordance with this code [GCC Title 8].

6. The SAP application complies with all city zoning regulations and codes in effect at the time of the SAP application.

If an application does not meet one or more of the criteria above, the application shall be denied, and the reason the application does not meet the finding or findings shall be in writing.

SURE ABOUT THIS? I DON'T REACH  
SAME CONCLUSION, WITH THIS KIND OF  
BUILDING HEIGHT AND DENSITY

PLEASE READ FOLLOWING PAGES 25-27  
IN DETAIL.

?

|  |  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|--|--|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  | <p>(c) The actions, if any, that the applicant could take to obtain approval.</p> <p>Every final decision rendered shall provide or be accompanied by notice to the applicant regarding the applicant's right to request a regulatory taking analysis pursuant to section <a href="#">67-8003</a>, Idaho Code. An applicant denied an application or aggrieved by a final decision concerning matters identified in section <a href="#">67-6521(1)(a)</a>, Idaho Code, may within twenty-eight (28) days after all remedies have been exhausted under local ordinance seek judicial review under the procedures provided by <a href="#">chapter 52, title 67</a>, Idaho Code.</p> |
|--|--|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

### Plans and Policy Review

The below is an analysis of applicable policies and plans.

| Other Items Reviewed                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Plan/Policy                                    | Discussion/ Analysis                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <a href="#">Garden City Comprehensive Plan</a> | <p><a href="#">Idaho Code 67-6511</a> notes that after considering the comprehensive plan and other evidence gathered through the public hearing process, ordinance amendments may be adopted or rejected, so as not in conflict with the Comprehensive Plan. Subsequently, an application need not satisfy every aspirational goal of the comprehensive plan, so long as it is not in direct conflict with specific provisions of the comprehensive plan.<sup>1</sup></p> <p><b>LAND USE</b></p> <p>This application contains five future land use designations of the Comprehensive Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Future Planning Area</li> <li>b) Mixed Use Residential</li> <li>c) Mixed Use Commercial</li> <li>d) Main Street</li> <li>e) Future Park/ Open Space</li> </ul> |

<sup>1</sup> See [2023 Givens Pursley Land Use Handbook; page 41, with specifics beginning on page 46](#) for further discussion.



PLEASE  
READ ↓

These designations are defined as:

**MIXED USE RESIDENTIAL:** The mixed-use residential area is north of Adams/ Alworth Street. This designation allows for residential and commercial uses in a form and scale that is residential in character and design. A mix of residential; small scale office and retail; and public and semi-public uses are appropriate in this district. Regulations for this area should focus on form more than use, with a maximum height of two stories.

**MIXED USE COMMERCIAL:** The mixed-use commercial designation is for the area south of Adams Street. The intent of this designation is to create an area for mixed uses, including residential, office, retail, and small scale industrial, that are more urban in character than in the mixed-use residential area. Three-story buildings and 40%- 60% lot coverage, with aggregated open spaces for pocket parks should guide the development pattern in this area.

THE SAP  
IS NOT  
WITHIN AN  
"ACTIVITY  
NODE"

**MAIN STREET CORRIDOR:** Create a "Main Street" corridor as a principal street with a mix and concentration of uses along Adams/ Alworth Street with an alignment through a redeveloped Idaho Expo site connecting with the Activity Node at Glenwood and Marigold Streets. The corridor should have additional activity nodes along the street that connect the main street to the arterial roadways and/or the Boise River. The activity nodes should be limited to not dilute their function as a center. The focus of development should be on minimum front yard setbacks, parking on the street and behind buildings, and pedestrian amenities. The center of the activity nodes on the Main Street

corridor should be integrated vertically with more height at the principle main street intersection of the node.

**FUTURE PLANNING AREA:** Future Planning Areas have been identified for large parcels of vacant or under-developed land including the area west of the city within the Area of City Impact; the area around the Idaho Expo Center, including the Idaho Department of Transportation (ITD) District 3 Headquarters; and the **Ada County Highway District (ACHD) property** at 37th and Adams. This designation is intended to identify these areas for further master plan or site-specific planning efforts. The large size of these areas provides a unique opportunity for master planning with consideration for a mix of uses and residential housing types; street, sidewalk and bicycle networks and connectivity; spaces for public uses including parks, open spaces, plazas; and infrastructure improvements including water and sewer. Each of the designated Future Planning Areas presents unique opportunities and challenges that should be considered in the area's master planning.

**ACHD Site:** \* Opportunity to open additional access and river frontage to the public. \* Regeneration of the existing operations and maintenance yard along the river to the highest and best use. \* Challenge in creating higher intensity use of the site that transitions and is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

**EXISTING PARKS AND PROPOSED GREEN SPACE AND/OR PARKS:** Areas that are devoted to green spaces including golf courses, open spaces, and park uses, or are proposed for green spaces are shown on the Land Use Map. Green spaces contribute to the health and well-being of the community. Existing parks should be preserved. The location shown on the map of future green spaces is just an approximation, and the design of future spaces should be well integrated into the development plan for the property, surrounding context, with maximum opportunity for pedestrian and bicycle access.

While the proposal contemplates greater development intensity than described in certain future land use designation narratives, staff finds the proposal remains consistent with the broader goals, vision, and Future Planning Area designation.

#### GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

This application is supported by the following Goals and Objectives:

##### Goals

- 1 Nurture the City
- 2 Improve the City Image

I DON'T  
REALITY THIS  
CONCLUSION  
PLEASE  
EXPLAIN THE  
NEAMS.

COULD ENVISION 3 TO 4  
STORY BUILDINGS ALONG ADAMS  
STREET (MAIN STREET) - NOT  
WHAT IS PROPOSED.

ALSO PROCESS  
REQUIRES TWO  
NEIGHBORHOOD  
MEETINGS.

concurrently and include, but are not limited to, design review, conditional use, variance, and/or subdivision. Omission of criteria from the SAPPO that are found elsewhere in the development code are not considered a conflict between the SAPPO and the development code.

4. Specific Area Plan Application Components:

- a. The SAP application shall be comprehensive enough to adequately guide the development or redevelopment of a property to achieve the vision of the proposed SAP district.
- b. The SAP application shall identify street cross section design (excluding ACHD and ITD adopted street sections), road alignments, setbacks, interface with the adjacent neighborhood, allowed, conditionally allowed, and prohibited uses, and general mix of uses and provide a general utility plan.
- c. The SAP application shall identify:
  - (1) Setbacks, setback exceptions, lot coverage, and height.
  - (2) Density.
  - (3) Uses that are permitted, conditionally permitted, and prohibited. If any uses are different than section 8-7A-1 defined uses, the definition of such uses shall be provided.
- d. The SAP application should adhere to the general design standards concepts in Garden City Code specifically related to the development interface with street and public realms and street trees.
- e. The seventy-foot (70') minimum setback to the ordinary high-water mark of the Boise River cannot be amended.
- f. The provisions of the development code of Garden City such as, but not limited to, relating to drainage and floodplain, shall govern all standards and/or processes that are not specifically identified, set forth, or modified by the SAP application.
- g. If there is a conflict between other provisions of the development code of Garden City and the adopted SAPPO regulations, the SAPPO regulations shall govern.

5. Design criteria shall repeat the standards of chapter 8-4 of this title in the SAP application unless there are proposed SAP application standards that would contradict existing city standards. The following SAP application components may be different than what is contained in existing city code, but shall be included in the SAP application:

# PUBLIC SURVEY

## Neighborhood/ Community Rezone Input: ACHD Site and surrounding area

SAPFY2026-0001 | Specific Area Plan (SAPD-02)

Garden City has a rare opportunity on its hands.

The Ada County Highway District (ACHD) is preparing to sell a property along the Boise River. For years, this site has been used as a maintenance yard, tucked away from public view and largely cut off from the water's edge. When it redevelops, that changes. This site could open up new public access to the river, create a place where people want to spend time, and set a new standard for what thoughtful, community-driven development looks like in Garden City.

Before any plans are drawn or decisions are made, we want to hear from you. What do you want to feel when you walk through this area? What would make you proud of how it turned out? What would make you feel like we got it wrong?

A few things are worth knowing upfront. The City is not able to purchase this land to preserve the site as a public park, and the site's size and location mean it will need to support a more active, mixed-use environment to be viable, similar to other properties that have redeveloped nearby along the river. But within those realities, there is room to shape what this place becomes: its character, its feel, how it meets the river, and how it fits into the neighborhood around it.

With this in mind, we want to hear from you. This survey will directly inform the Specific Area Plan for this site, which is the guiding document that will shape zoning, design standards, and development requirements for years to come.

This survey takes about 5 minutes. All responses are anonymous.

VERY MISLEADING. NO DISCUSSION OF MID-URBAN MIXED-USE WITH UP TO 100' BUILDINGS AND HIGH DENSITY. SURVEY PARTICIPANTS LIKED IDEA OF MIXED-USE, SIMILAR TO "NEARBY" WFD. PRIMARY CONCERNS ARE HEIGHT LIMITS NEAR EXISTING HOUSES, OPEN SPACE NEAR RIVER AND GREENBELT, ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION, AND COMMUNITY GATHERING.

## "CORRECT THE RECORD"

### Neighborhood Meeting Summary

Neighborhood meetings are a precursor to the application and are required by code. They are intended to engage the neighbors and facilitate public input that can be incorporated into the SAP prior to the application being submitted to the city. The city conducted a neighborhood meeting on 4/22/2026.

The following is a synopsis of the discussions that occurred during the Neighborhood Meeting.

**Question:** Why does this SAP include properties beyond the ACHD site?

**Response:** More than just the ACHD site is included to ensure continuity and cohesive planning across the area. Including adjacent properties allows the SAP to create a unified destination and ensures coordinated zoning to any future redevelopment.

**Question:** Will this compel properties to redevelop?

**Response:** If a site is legally in use/ developed this will not affect the property until which time the property owner decides to redevelop.

**Comment:** A traffic analysis should be required.

**Response:** At this time, the adoption of the Heron Commons SAP District ordinance would not, by itself, trigger the need for a traffic analysis. The proposed ordinance does not constitute an upzone with respect to allowable density or development intensity when compared to existing zoning.

The application includes the rezoning of approximately thirty-four (34) acres. Of this area, approximately seven (7) acres are currently zoned R-3, with the remaining approximately twenty-seven (27) acres zoned C-2. The existing C-2 zoning district does not prescribe a maximum residential density, while the existing R-3 zoning district allows residential development at densities of up to thirty-five (35) dwelling units per acre. In addition, neither of the existing zoning districts establishes height limits.

The proposed Heron Commons SAP District does not increase the residential density permitted within the areas currently zoned C-2. While the proposal allows for increased residential density relative to what would otherwise be permitted under the R-3 designation, the overall development potential of the district is constrained by new height limits and by restrictions on the amount of land that may be developed within the Public Interface Subdistrict (HCPI).

While density allowances may increase in areas currently zoned R-3, the introduction of new height limits, stepbacks, and development allocation requirements across the SAP District substantially constrain overall development potential. As a result, when considered across the district as a whole, the proposal may not result in a marked increase in overall residential density compared to existing zoning.

How CAN YOU REACH THIS CONCLUSION? YOU ARE ENCOURAGING DENSITY AND USE FAR GREATER THAN THE MINIMUM DENSITIES ALLOWED.

ACHD NORMALLY REQUIRES T.I.S FOR ACTIONS THAT INCREASE PEAK HOUR VOLUMES > 100 VPH, WHICH THIS SAP WILL LIKELY DO.

[THE SAP PROCESS REQUIRES TWO NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS. WHEN DID 2ND ONE OCCUR?]

THIS IS MISLEADING AND SHOULD BE STRUCK.

NOR A MINIMUM

AND A MINIMUM OF 14 DU/ACRE.

BUT IT PROHIBITS LOWER DENSITY USES CURRENTLY ALLOWED BY BASE ZONING.

ENCOURAGING

USES THAT GENERATE LOWER TRAFFIC VOLUMES LIKE SINGLE FAMILY HOUSING WILL BE PROHIBITED. OUR VISION IS A HIGHER DENSITY USE COMPARED TO EXISTING ADJACENT USES. THIS SAP AS ENVISIONED WILL INCREASE

## NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING SUMMARY

TRAFFIC VOLUMES.

The proposed ordinance also narrows the range of permitted uses. Uses that have the potential to generate higher traffic volumes, such as industrial uses or large-scale retail otherwise allowed under the existing zoning districts, are more limited under the SAP District. Accordingly, the ordinance does not inherently increase traffic-generating potential at the entitlement level.

MISLEADING

MISLEADING

At this stage, the City is not reviewing a specific development proposal or identified land use. Traffic analysis requirements are typically evaluated at the time of development application, based on the nature, scale, and intensity of the proposed development. Future development within the Heron Commons SAP District may be required to submit traffic studies if applicable City or Ada County Highway District thresholds are met.

BUT TRAFFIC IMPACTS COULD BE EVALUATED NOW BASED ON OUR VISION

**Comment:** The residences to the west should include a height buffer.

**Response:** This comment informed the initial drafting of the ordinance. The current draft includes a height buffer of four stories adjacent to Heron Park Street.

**Question:** What is the setback from the Greenbelt?

**Response:** The setback is 70 feet from the ordinary high watermark and 15 feet from the Greenbelt, per standard city code requirements.

**Comment:** Adams Street should not connect, not even for bicycles and pedestrians.

**Response:** Traffic is acknowledged as a concern. Planning staff has proposed that the Adams Street connection be limited to bicycle and pedestrian use, or, if vehicular, be designed in a way that does not attract cut-through traffic. Design solutions can make the route function primarily for the site's access rather than as a shortcut.

CURIOUS AS TO HOW? CUT THROUGH TRAFFIC GATED OFF?

The City has also heard concerns regarding bicycle traffic if Adams Street connects. In response, the ordinance includes a defined post implementation evaluation period. This period allows time for development and travel patterns to stabilize and provides a structured, performance-based process to evaluate the connection's operation. If documented safety or operational issues arise and cannot be adequately mitigated, the ordinance provides a clear pathway, including public hearings, to modify, restrict, or, if necessary, close the connection.

**Comment:** The greenbelt is congested.

**Response:** The City receives consistent feedback about the increasing congestion and conflicting uses on the greenbelt in this area. Planning documents support providing a secondary route to Greenbelt to provide a relief valve to Greenbelt when there are a number of conflicting users. A connection from Adams Street to the bridge would serve as this relief valve and help distribute bicycle transportation traffic from Adams Street directly to the bridge at 36<sup>th</sup> Street.

**Question:** What happens if the property remains in its current zoning and does not go through rezoning?

# FINDINGS OF FACT

|                                                                                                                                                                                             |  |           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
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| <p>TRAFFIC IMPACT STUDY SHOULD BE DONE NOW. FINDINGS WILL LIKELY SHOW HUGE IMPACTS SUCH THAT LOWER BUILDING HEIGHT AND DENSITY IS BETTER, TO BE COMPATIBLE WITH EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS.</p> |  | <p>??</p> | <p>thresholds remain subject to the appeal procedures established by the Garden City Code. These implementation requirements ensure continued public participation and City oversight as development occurs and support the orderly and phased development of the SAP District over time.</p> <p>Comments requested the preparation of a Traffic Impact Study (TIS) prior to adoption of the Heron Commons SAP District. This application establishes a zoning district and regulatory framework rather than approving a specific development plan, site design, subdivision, or building project. At this stage, the location, intensity, mix of uses, phasing, access configuration, and transportation demand associated with future development are not yet known with sufficient specificity to support a meaningful traffic analysis.</p> <p>As a result, any transportation impact study prepared at this stage would necessarily rely on assumptions regarding future land uses, development intensity, phasing, timing, and site design that may never occur. Consequently, the predictive value of such an analysis would be limited, and its conclusions would be hypothetical rather than predictive of future transportation conditions.</p> <p>The purpose of the SAP District is to establish development standards and implementation procedures that will guide future development proposals. Traffic impacts associated with specific development projects will be evaluated through subsequent application processes when detailed site plans, access locations, circulation patterns, building sizes, and land use intensities have been identified.</p> <p>Therefore, it is concluded that a district-wide TIS is not necessary to support</p> |
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|  |  | <p>??</p> <p>adoption of the zoning ordinance and that transportation impacts can be more accurately assessed and appropriately mitigated during future development review processes, consistent with applicable City requirements and agency review procedures.</p> <p>There was extensive public testimony regarding the potential extension of Adams Street and its effects on the adjacent Waterfront District neighborhood. This proposal does not require a general-purpose motor vehicle connection between the Heron Commons SAP District and the local section of Adams Street within the Waterfront District Subdivision. Rather, the ordinance requires pedestrian and bicycle connectivity and emergency access connectivity while expressly discouraging a vehicular connection. The ordinance does not prescribe the specific design, or alignment in which bicycle connectivity or emergency access must be provided, allowing flexibility to achieve required connectivity objectives while minimizing neighborhood impacts.</p> <p>Further, the ordinance contains provisions requiring any future connection that may be required by the Ada County Highway District (ACHD) to minimize impacts to the Waterfront District neighborhood. These provisions are intended to address concerns related to cut-through traffic, neighborhood character, safety, parking, noise, and other potential impacts identified during the public comment process. The City does not have sole authority over public roadway decisions and cannot unilaterally prohibit future roadway connections that may be required by the governmental agency with jurisdiction over transportation facilities. However, the SAP District standards are structured to discourage a general vehicular connection</p> |
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| <p>MISLEADING. TRAFFIC IMPACTS SHOULD BE MEASURED AGAINST WHAT EXISTS TODAY, NOT SOME ARBITRARY FUTURE. FURTHER, THE SAP PROHIBITS LESS DENSE USES CURRENTLY ALLOWED BY BASE ZONING.</p> |  | <p>The amendment replaces existing zoning with a comprehensive, site-specific regulatory framework that provides greater clarity and control over development outcomes. The current zoning districts do not impose maximum height limits on portions of the property and allow a broader range of uses, including uses that may generate higher traffic volumes or greater impacts. In contrast, the proposed SAP District narrows permitted uses, establishes building height limits, organizes development into subdistricts, and incorporates design standards intended to ensure compatibility with surrounding development and the Boise River corridor. These provisions reduce the potential for adverse impacts associated with uncoordinated or higher-intensity development under existing zones.</p> <p>The ordinance further includes requirements that directly address public safety and welfare considerations. Flood protection improvements are required to ensure that floodwaters associated with a FEMA-designated one-hundred-year flood event are contained within the district and do not adversely impact adjacent properties. Required public infrastructure, including streets, pathways, and accessways, must be constructed in coordination with development, ensuring safe and functional circulation for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles. The circulation network is specifically designed to reduce the potential for cut-through traffic by prioritizing pedestrian and bicycle travel, limiting vehicular access, and incorporating traffic calming design strategies that discourage through movement while supporting local access needs.</p> <p>In developing the proposed ordinance, staff considered public input and incorporated</p> |
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|  |  | <p>measures to address identified concerns, particularly related to traffic and neighborhood compatibility. The ordinance includes a requirement for adjacent neighborhood compatibility which expressly notes that height reductions, greater setbacks than what is permitted by this SAP zoning district may be required as well as design standards require building orientation, placement of windows and outdoor spaces, and the use of substantial landscape buffering, including large tree plantings, to mitigate privacy impacts and livability of adjacent homes.</p> <p>The ordinance provides for safety considerations of the adjacent Waterfront District Subdivision, by requiring secondary emergency access, unless waived by North Ada County Fire and Rescue District, to be established to the Waterfront District Subdivision as required in the approval of that subdivision.</p> <p>Additionally, the proposal requires publicly accessible connections to the Boise River and Greenbelt, adherence to established setbacks, and integration with existing and planned infrastructure systems, all of which support safe access, environmental protection, and orderly development. Future subdivision, design review, and permitting processes will provide additional opportunities to evaluate and condition site-specific impacts such as traffic, drainage, utilities, and building design.</p> <p>As noted in the staff report, the proposed ordinance does not increase overall development intensity relative to existing zoning when evaluated across the district, and instead introduces additional constraints, standards, and phased infrastructure requirements that ensure development occurs in a controlled and coordinated manner.</p> |
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A SECONDARY ACCESS  
ALREADY EXISTS. GO  
CHECK IT OUT.

THIS IS MISLEADING. JUST  
BECAUSE IT IS ZONED ONE WAY, IT DOES NOT MEAN A  
PROPERTY OWNER CAN DO  
ANYTHING.

WHERE IS  
THIS DEFINED?

|   |                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
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|   |                                          | <p>proposal may result in significant adverse impacts that could affect or aggrieve the City or surrounding properties. These provisions provide an additional level of public review for applications that generate substantial public concern or present the potential for significant impacts.</p> <p>For applications that do not otherwise require a public hearing, decisions remain subject to the appeal procedures established in the Garden City Code. Accordingly, future development proposals within the SAP District remain subject to public notice, opportunities for community input, administrative review, potential public hearing requirements, and appeal rights. These procedures provide meaningful opportunities for public participation while also allowing flexibility necessary for phased implementation of the district over time.</p> <p>Because the zoning map amendment applies a more refined and protective regulatory framework, incorporates infrastructure and safety requirements, and includes targeted measures to reduce transportation and compatibility impacts, it will not be materially detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare.</p> |
| X | <p>How is THIS CONCLUSION REACHED? →</p> | <p><b>Finding 4: The zoning map amendment shall not result in an adverse impact upon the delivery of services by any political subdivision providing public services within the city including, but not limited to, school districts.</b></p> <p><b>Reasoned Statement:</b><br/>The proposed zoning map amendment will not result in an adverse impact upon the delivery of services by any political subdivision providing public services within the City, including, but not limited to, school districts.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

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|  |  | <p>The proposed amendment establishes a Specific Area Plan (SAP) District that provides a comprehensive framework for future redevelopment while requiring coordinated infrastructure delivery. The ordinance includes provisions for phased infrastructure improvements, including streets, pathways, utilities, and flood protection facilities, to ensure that necessary public improvements are constructed or financially secured in conjunction with redevelopment. This approach helps ensure that future growth occurs in a manner that is proportional to available services and infrastructure capacity.</p> <p>Questions have been raised regarding the potential development intensity that could result from the proposed SAP District and the corresponding demand on public services and transportation infrastructure. However, the proposed district introduces height limitations that do not currently exist under portions of the existing zoning designation. Additionally, the existing C-2 General Commercial zone does not impose a residential density cap. While the SAP District allows for a mixed-use pattern of development and the redistribution of development potential within the district, the overall regulatory framework represents a <u>down-zoning</u> in certain respects, or at minimum does not increase development intensity beyond what could otherwise occur under the existing zoning regulations. As such, the amendment is not anticipated to increase demand for public services beyond the level that could already be generated under current zoning entitlements.</p> <p>Furthermore, this application does not approve or propose a specific development project. Rather, it establishes a regulatory framework and land use plan for future</p> |
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NO. THIS SHOULD BE  
RE-WRITTEN. SPECULATIVE  
AND MISLEADING.

HOW IS THIS  
CONCLUSION REACHED?

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|  |   |  | <p>mixed-use redevelopment within the district. Any future development proposal will be required to submit site-specific plans, studies, and supporting documentation as part of applicable subdivision, design review, building permit, and other development review processes. At that time, public service providers, utility agencies, transportation agencies, school districts, and other reviewing entities will have the opportunity to evaluate the specific impacts of a proposed development and identify any necessary improvements or mitigation measures.</p> <p>Because the proposed amendment incorporates infrastructure planning requirements, establishes development limitations not currently applicable under portions of the existing zoning, does not increase development potential beyond existing entitlements, and requires future site-specific review prior to development, <u>the amendment will not adversely affect the ability of the City or other public service providers to deliver services.</u></p> |
|  | X |  | <p><b>Finding 5: The annexation of land, if proposed, is in the best of interest of the city and complies with the procedures as set forth in Idaho Code section <u>50-222</u>.</b></p> <p><b>Reasoned Statement:</b><br/>This application is not proposing annexation into Garden City; the property has been annexed into Garden City.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

| GCC 8-6B-5 DEVELOPMENT CODE AMENDMENT: REQUIRED FINDINGS |               |                                    |          |
|----------------------------------------------------------|---------------|------------------------------------|----------|
| Conclusion                                               |               |                                    |          |
| Compliant                                                | Not Compliant | Not Applicable to this Application | Standard |





Outlook

# EMAIL EXCHANGE

RE: SAPFY2026-0001 Heron Commons SAP Letter

From Jenah Thornborrow <jthorn@GARDENCITYIDAHO.ORG>

Date Wed 9/16/2026 6:03 PM

To Rod Linja <rodlinja@gmail.com>

Thank you, Rod.

From: Rod Linja <rodlinja@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, September 16, 2026 3:01 PM

To: Jenah Thornborrow <jthorn@GARDENCITYIDAHO.ORG>

Subject: Re: SAPFY2026-0001 Heron Commons SAP Letter

Hi Jenah,

Thanks for your time this afternoon. I'm back with Wi-Fi.

The Future Land Use Designation map on page 60 of the Comprehensive Plan, does not appear to match the Future Land Use Designation map on page 25 of the Staff Report (near the end).

<https://gardencityidaho.org/comprehensive-plan/>

Chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://storage.googleapis.com/juniper-media-library/464/2026/04/COMP%20PLAN%20ADOPTED%2010272025%20amended%2004152026.pdf

Nor does it match the link on your Comprehensive Plan website to the Future Land Use Designation map.

<https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:VA6C2:acd97c0a-bef4-46ca-a1f9-923eaae6d6c3?viewer%21megaVerb=group-discover>

I'm seeing differences in Future Planning Areas and Activity Nodes/Neighborhood Destination Nodes. The SAP area is not included in the Neighborhood Destination Node.

Also, the area of the SAP 37th/38th and Adams is not listed as an Activity Node in 8-2B-3 Form Standards. See E. Location of Activity Nodes.

E.

Location of Activity Nodes:

1.

The neighborhood and destination centers include the properties within a quarter mile from the center of the intersection as measured following a street or pathway, from the intersection of:

- a. Adams and 50th Streets.
  - b. Adams and 42nd Streets.
  - c. Glenwood and Marigold Streets.
  - d. Chinden Boulevard and Garret Street.
  - e. Chinden Boulevard and 50th Street.
  - f. State Street and Pierce Park Lane.
2. A neighborhood and destination center is located at the easterly city boundary to 36th Street between the Boise River and Chinden Boulevard.
3. The Transit Oriented Development Nodes include the properties within a quarter mile from the center of the intersection as measured following a street or pathway, from the:
- a. Chinden Boulevard and Glenwood Street intersection.
  - b. Chinden Boulevard and Veterans Parkway intersection.
  - c. State Street and Horseshoe Bend Road.
  - d. State Street and Glenwood Street.

Hope this helps. See you tonight.

Thanks,

Rod Linja

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**From:** Jenah Thornborrow <[jthorn@GARDENCITYIDAHO.ORG](mailto:jthorn@GARDENCITYIDAHO.ORG)>

**Sent:** Thursday, September 10, 2026 8:06 AM

**To:** Rod Linja <[rodlinja@gmail.com](mailto:rodlinja@gmail.com)>

**Subject:** RE: SAPFY2026-0001 Heron Commons SAP Letter

Good morning, Rod,