



21 November 2020

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Re: SUB20-00044 / Dallas Harris South Subdivision No. 2

Mayor McLean and Councilmembers,

The Barber Valley Neighborhood Association (BVNA) board supports the referenced preliminary/final plat application in the Harris Ranch area of the City of Boise. We expressed concern about bike/ped connectivity and Safe Routes to School during our testimony to your Planning and Zoning Commissioners on 5 October. Our concerns were not acknowledged by the Commission – we understand why. This application is compliant with the Specific Plan and the proposed infrastructure surrounding the future elementary school is good – wide sidewalks and an attractive future streetscape.

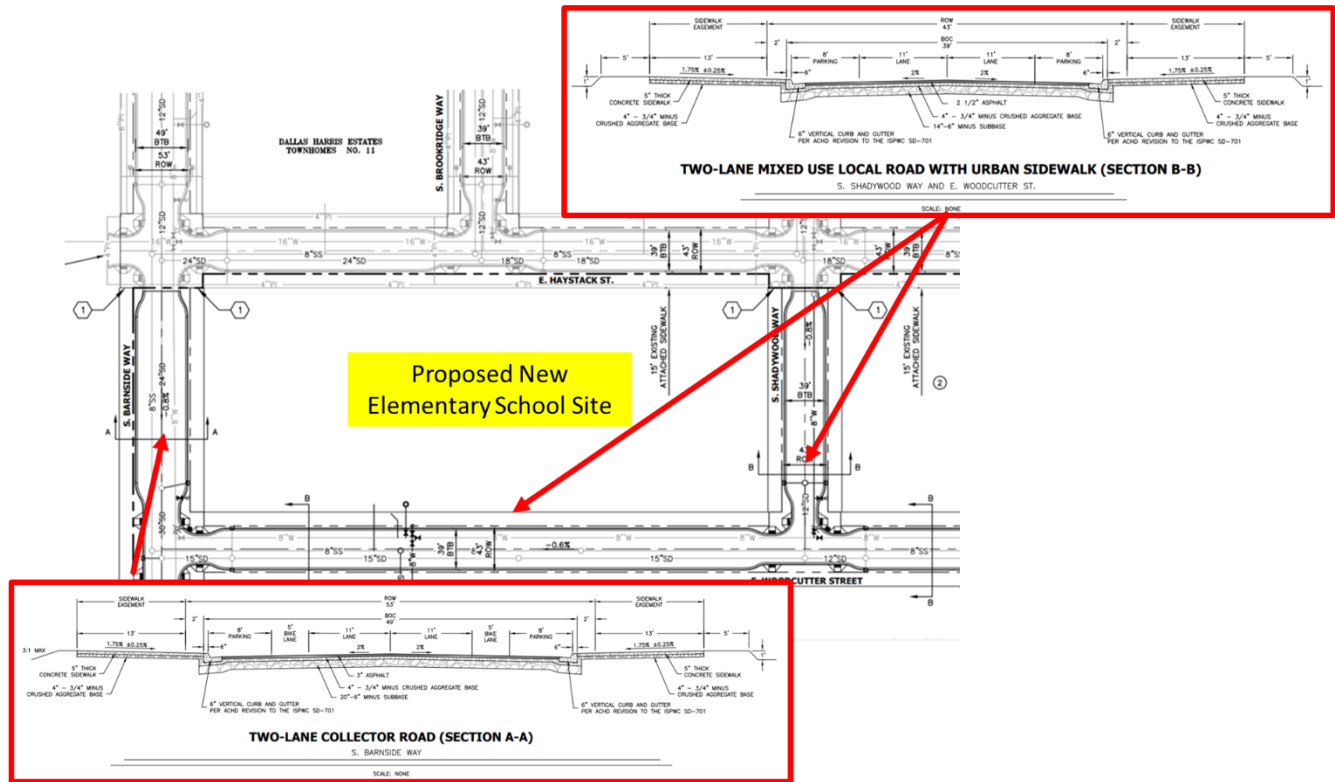
However, the streetscape could be 'better'. We do not necessarily agree with the perspective that 'good is the enemy of great'. We have learned more about active transportation infrastructure since the specific plans were approved more than ten years ago. We are specifically concerned about the following, which is offered primarily to complement your City planning staff, but also highlight the lack of due diligence and thoroughness of ACHD and the Boise School District:

1. The ACHD Project Report addresses this "preliminary/final plat application to develop 4 lots for mixed use and an elementary school lot on 12.04 acres" yet makes no recommendations, nor acknowledge infrastructure, that could improve walk/bike access to the future school site.
2. The Boise School District will open a new school in this development yet their response to your planning department is the "Developer and/or Owner have made arrangements to comply with all requirements of the Boise School District". Further, they boldly comment that there will be NO traffic impacts nor Safe Routes to School impacts.

We certainly recognize that both BSD and ACHD did the minimum required to support this application. We suggest that the City can request more of their partners and ask them to offer their recommendations on the future school site. The Barber Valley Development Company has always gone well beyond the minimum development requirements and may have accepted additional conditions of approval to improve the walk/bike access to the school site – if they had been offered updated alternatives and recommendations to the future public infrastructure of our neighborhood.

A specific example of infrastructure oversight is the planned streetscape on the south and east side of the school site (Shadywood and Woodcutter – graphic next page). This is an expansive public right of way that is planned to accommodate a 13' wide sidewalk, parking, and an 11' travel lane. There is no bike lane – the planning expectation is that a cyclist will be expected to 'take the lane' and sharrows will be the solution. Is this reasonable on streets that we are building NOW surrounding a future school site? This will likely be updated with new roadway striping to add a bike lane, but why not develop infrastructure now that encourages active transportation and eases safe school access? This could have included raised bike lanes and other emerging 'best practices' but we've allowed the rigidity of the

specific plans to limit our approach to growth and active transportation infrastructure – even in a model planned community designed to encourage pedestrian and bicycle travel.



BVNA supports approval of this application. Our comments are intended to highlight the limitations of specific plans (SP-01, SP-02, and SP-03) and the confusing inability of ACHD and BSD to respond appropriately to a development application. We request that Council consider directing staff to develop a process to permit some amount of flexibility and recommendations for best practices, even if not codified in the specific plans.

Barber Valley Neighborhood Association Board

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