



MEMO TO TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Agenda Topic on the Transportation Commission Agenda

From: Miranda Carson, Coordination Planner

Meeting Date: March 6, 2023

Topic: Staff Communications

Below are summaries of relevant correspondences received by City Staff since the last TC meeting. As always, I welcome feedback on any of these items; specifically, I request your feedback on the Pheasant Pointe and Ten Mile x Cherry concerns.

Pheasant Pointe Resident Concerns

We received the following message from resident Katy Lightfield:

I live in Meridian at Ustick and Locust Grove. There is constant racing on Ustick between Meridian Road to Eagle Rd. Currently, the speed limit is 40 mph. I would like to see the speed limit lowered to 35 mph.

On Locust Grove between Fairview to Chinden, the speed limit is 40 mph. Currently, the speed limit is 40 mph. The road is narrow and there are several pedestrians along this area of the street. There is not much lighting at night so it can be difficult to see pedestrians. I would like this lowered to 25 or 30 mph.

People will cut through our subdivision on Yellow Peak and/or at Stormy to avoid the light at Ustick and Locust Grove. Vehicles will speed through our subdivision and raise safety concerns. Is it possible to install a speed bump to slow down traffic at Stormy and at Yellow Peak?

I let Ms. Lightfield know I would get these concerns to our Transportation Commission for feedback and ACHD Staff. I sent Mr. Wasson the original request and the following summary:

I wanted to get these in front of you sooner rather than waiting until TC discusses them in March. We received a few concerns/requests from a citizen.

1. Request for speed limit lowered on Ustick, Meridian to Eagle to 35mph.
2. Request for speed limit lowered on Locust Grove, Fairview to Chinden to 25 or 30mph.
3. There was also mention of inadequate lighting on the Locust Grove, Fairview to Chinden stretch. Is there an evaluation for this?
4. Request for speed humps on Yellow Peak and Stormy, Yellow Peak to Locust Grove dues to cut through traffic.

We appreciate any progress that can get started on addressing these prior to the March 6th meeting.

Ten Mile x Cherry Resident Concerns

We received the following concern from Mark Walter:

We need to address the multiple accidents that have become more frequent in front of the Albertsons and McDonalds at Ten Mile and Cherry lane. I have lived here for 25 years and have never seen it this bad. Most of the accidents occur because of speeding and also people trying to turn to the west crossing both lanes while exiting Albertsons and McDonalds. We just had another accident 2/20/23. People aren't paying attention and with the 2 traffic lights being so close together people speed to try and make both lights without stopping and they end up colliding with the people who are trying to cross both lanes while eating their nice hot french fries they just got at the drive thru at McDonalds. By the way the bank that was originally first planned would have been a much safer addition instead of a fast food restaurant that stays open late into the night for people to use to crank up their stereos and make burnouts while turning onto Cherry lane. Stepping up patrols might help, but that would only be temporary. Maybe extending the curb for the northbound turn lane onto Ten Mile so that only right turns could be made so they don't try cross all lanes when exiting Albertsons and McDonalds may be an option. Not sure what would be best as a solution. I am getting tired of seeing the flashing lights of firetrucks and police cars for extended periods while some poor soul is getting extracted with the jaws of life because someone didn't want to have to stop at the next red light. I already sent a similar letter to ACHD to hopefully get it addressed. Please help. Thank you for your consideration in this matter. Feel free to contact me for further input.

Dave Miles, City Chief of Staff responded to the resident:

Thank you for reaching out and sharing your concerns about this intersection. Your email is timely to some degree. The Mayor and Council have been discussion traffic, intersections and pedestrian safety in light of recent incidents, and there is a group of city staff, council and commission members, ACHD team members and some other stakeholder groups that have just kicked off an effort to evaluate intersections in Meridian to assess what changes need to be made on an intersection-by-intersection location, and how those changes can be made. The Mayor just put out a newsletter summarizing that effort, and the task force will also be part of a discussion between City Council and ACHD Commission, this Thursday (23rd) at 4pm.

You can find out more about the task force and the meeting here:

<https://mailchi.mp/meridiancity/intersectionandpedestriansafetytaskforce?e=d2f027bd93>

(If you are not signed up for the City's newsletters, you can do that here: <https://us7.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=53b03dd2c15e03604fcc94bd5&id=bbf84792ce>)

I have copied Miranda Carson, our transportation coordinating planner who is leading the task force effort, as well as the Police Chief, so they are aware of your comments and suggestions. I will ask that they consider your comments as part of the task force efforts as well.

We also received this feedback from Councilwoman Jessica Perreault:

I live three blocks from this intersection and drive through it almost daily. Please let me know if the committee has specific questions about this one. His suggestion about making northbound Ten Mile right turn only is likely not what ACHD would do, but it's also a really bad idea!! The north bound left turn lane is short and often backed up into the main left

lane, which slows down both the northbound and westbound traffic, so folks speed through the left turn light trying to make it before it turns red. The greater concern is the south bound left turn lane from Cherry unto Ten Mile. I've sat through that light cycle at least three times, often not even during rush hour.

He is correct in that this intersection is a busy mess and I don't think ACHD has it in the budget for many years. Northbound Ten Mile between 3-6pm has cars backed up to Pine Ave. I have to make a left to go south on TM out of my subdivision (without a light) and it feels like I'm running the gauntlet every time!! It accommodates way more traffic than any of the Black Cat intersections, yet they are widening some of those because of the high school, the ACHD facility, etc.

I responded to the resident to clarify and let him know I would ask Transportation Commission to discuss and provide feedback:

Thank you for your feedback. I will share this with the Transportation Commission at the March 6th meeting. That will be in Council Chambers at 3:30pm. I wanted to clarify your concerns.

1. It sounds like you have concerns with the left turns out of the commercial development onto Cherry (red arrow). Are you asking ACHD to consider these left turns out to be restricted i.e. right turn out only?
2. You would also like left turns out on Ten Mile to be restricted via extending the existing median down (purple line).



Mr. Walter clarified:

Thank you for replying in such a timely matter. Yes, you are pretty much correct. I am not the expert when it comes to what can be done. I did get a response from ACHD and they felt like, based on their records that there hasn't been enough accidents due to these exits

yet.....not sure how many is enough. I know a curb line restricting the turns to just right turns would also not allow a left turn from the subdivision across cherry lane (which is my subdivision) . That is a dangerous left turn anyway so close to the light. We use the light at Lauderhill or come out on Ten mile north of the intersection. I know you only marked Albertson' s exit, but McDonald's exit is also a trouble spot. I appreciate you guys taking a look at some options no matter what the outcome is. The fact is with the growth, it probably won't get any safer unless something is done about it. I think where you marked with the purple it is already a right turn only from Albertsons onto Ten mile.

Eagle Road Speeds Resident Concerns

We received the following concern from Laurie Boesch:

I am writing to ask for an update on talks with ITD regarding the safety and speed limit on Eagle Road. The last I heard, the city council met with ITD representatives in August 2022. In that meeting, ITD proposed a return in the spring to bring back any new plan to improve Eagle Road, including a plan to reduce speed and possibly making unprotected left turns safer.

I would like to know if there is a new meeting planned in the near future. If so, when is it and what will be discussed?

As you know, my husband Jerry and I will be keeping a close eye on these discussions as it is our daughter who was killed on Eagle road because of the unsafe speed limit and the unprotected left turns. Please keep us informed.

Dave Miles, City Chief of Staff responded to the resident:

Our staff have been meeting with ITD. Right now, the effort has ITD collecting additional data around speed and travel times, crash incidents, current signage so that the information can help evaluate and propose changes that will help improve safety. Those types of solutions that are on the table at this point include speed limit changes, turning movement changes (or closure of turns), signage needs, signal timings and additional elements.

The timing of the study efforts is still on pace for ITD to develop findings and report those, as well as recommendations, back to Council sometime in late March.

I am happy to keep you posted as the effort progresses or if you have questions.

Blue Heron x Meridian Road Traffic Signal Evaluation

Following a citizen concern in February the City requested ACHD evaluate Blue Heron at Meridian Road for the practicality of a traffic signal. ACHD has ordered out the counts, so they will have data to be able to evaluate. I was told once they receive the data back, the evaluation won't take very long. They should have the answer by April 1st.

Locust Grove x Amity Intersection Design Concerns

Following staff concerns, City Council sent the attached letter to ACHD with concerns regarding the Locust Grove x Amity Intersection design.

We also received the following resident concern regarding the design.

I have a number of concerns. For the number of vehicles of all sizes and shapes that use this intersection from either direction, this design is woefully inadequate. Having lived just south of Amity on Locust Grove Rd since 1970 (and my in-laws beginning in 1950) I have watched the change in traffic. For decades Amity Rd has been a truck route. Originally it was primarily agricultural vehicles from combines, hay balers, sugar beet haulers, milk trucks, etc., however there were also larger haulers using Amity to reach the other side of Boise rather than the main roadways. As time went on, while there are still agricultural vehicles, there were primarily passenger vehicles. However, within the last five years, additionally, trucks hauling dirt, gravel, rocks, heavy equipment have increased to service the construction of housing developments north, east and south of Amity. The properties south of me at the intersection of Lake Hazel and Locust Grove are in the primary stages of development considering the fact the land purchased by the developer runs north from Lake Hazel to the canal. Traffic along Locust Grove south of Amity will only increase. The roundabout plan you're proposing will not handle the increase as building moves to completion just from that development alone. Within five years we'll be looking at a rebuild of this roundabout much as the Eagle/Amity situation.

It also appears this plan disproportionately requires property from owners on the west side of the intersection due to the Verizon tower and the LDS church on the east side. In reference to the cell tower being too expensive to be moved, when it was proposed the criticism of the placement was based on the probability of it having to be moved due to future changes in the intersection and the cost of doing so. Now you are faced with that exact scenario and are penalizing the west properties by saying it's too expensive to move it. As an interesting side note I, as well as most of the other neighbors, received a letter from a representative of AT&T asking for permission to build a cell tower on any of our properties saying BECAUSE of the intersection construction the existing Verizon tower was going to be removed. I find it interesting they apparently have more information than ACHD does. The LDS church has additional property on the east side of their facility for more parking. On the design plan it appears they are not losing basically any property next to either Amity or Locust Grove. As well the catch basin could be placed elsewhere.

Re: the extruded curb intended to "protect" those walking along Amity west, particularly children walking to Mary McPherson Elementary, is just silly. That is only a perceived protection rather than an actual protection. With the amount of traffic of passenger cars and trucks, the steep descent down the hill, heavily loaded trucks not being able to make it up the hill, the possibility of that being a "protection" is ludicrous! No parent would allow their child to walk there. Additionally, there needs to be a turn lane to exit from Mary Mac onto Amity.

ACHD is again having to cobble together a "solution" because of lack of long-term planning as well as real time observation of the current situation, not just wires across the road counting.

Thank you for your consideration.

Connie Ward



Mayor Robert E. Simison

City Council Members:

Brad Hoaglund
Joe Borton
Luke Cavener

John Overton
Jessica Perreault
Liz Strader

February 17, 2023

Alexis Pickering, President
Ada County Highway District Commission
3775 Adams Street
Garden City, ID 83714

RE: Locust Grove x Amity Intersection Design

Dear President Pickering,

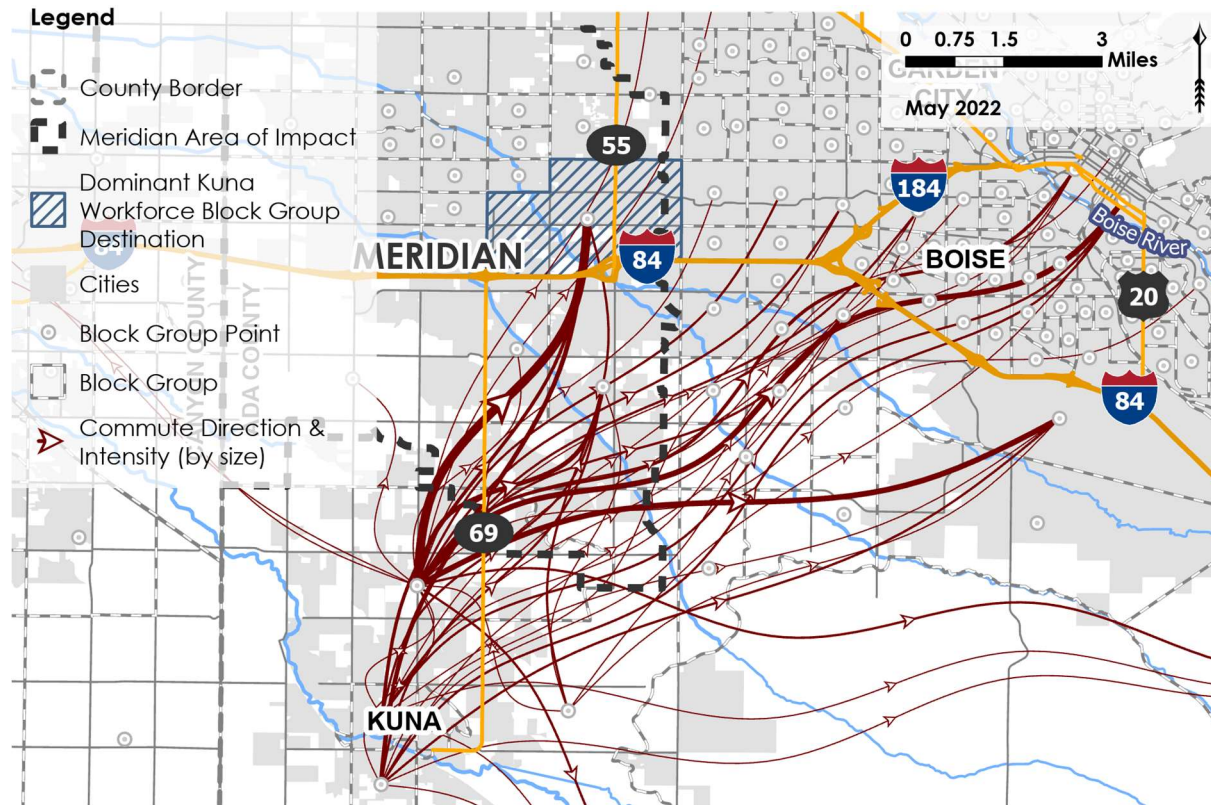
Meridian appreciates our ongoing relationship and partnership with ACHD as we work together to continue improvements of transportation facilities in and around the City. Through our partnership, we have seen many successful projects come to fruition through design and construction. With that, Meridian staff have highlighted a project in current design which warrants further discussion and comment. That project is the proposed design of the Locust Grove and Amity intersection.

The intersection at Locust Grove and Amity is important to accommodate ever growing east-west and north-south trips, for increasing bike and pedestrian safety and connectivity in the area, and to better support the Mary McPherson elementary school to the west. Moreover, Locust Grove is a critically important corridor for not just the residents of Meridian, but also those arriving in Meridian from Kuna to the south.

As Kuna continues to see heavy development activity east of Ten Mile Road, the Meridian Road corridor is no longer seeing strong demand only at peak hours, but throughout the day and including weekends. Traffic bound for, or originating in, Kuna is not just commuters. There are also freight trips that compound congestion and reduce operational efficiency. Without approved plans or funding to otherwise improve any aspect of the Meridian Road corridor, Locust Grove is becoming increasingly important for those trips not bound for an interchange, which are crossing the interstate.

As the following map illustrates, one of the Census Blocks in Meridian (160010103211) which includes Scentsy, Blue Cross, and other large employers, is the single most dominant Census Block to Census Block destination for Kuna workforce trips. These worker trips will naturally seek to avoid the congested interchanges at Meridian and Eagle when possible. This behavior should be

encouraged to reduce needless impacts of pass-through traffic near the I-84 ramps. This is all the truer when there are also no lane expansions or other bridge rehabilitation improvements planned for the Eagle Road interchange.



Note: Map does not show routes, only general origin-destination of 30 or more workers from all Kuna Census Block Groups. Data is from the 2019 Census LEHD, LODS data set.

The City of Meridian has advocated for years to preserve the Locust Road corridor south of Victory for 5-lanes. While not all of the necessary right-of-way has been preserved, the opportunity still exists to plan for a 5-lane facility. Unlike other corridors such as Ten Mile north of Cherry Lane, which was not adequately preserved for and wiped out many neighborhood landscape buffers, there is still a combination of undeveloped properties, city owned property, and additional open space that may accommodate future widening without overly impacting neighborhood identities.

The proposed intersection project at Locust Grove and Amity originally envisioned an additional southbound approach on the north-leg. This could have been a right-turn only lane (heading west on Amity), or some type of future bypass lane in the same direction. This was included due to the traffic demand model showing failure in this future leg. However, these options were removed from the project design primarily due to right-of-way costs and disproportionate impacts to existing stakeholders and the cell phone tower on the north-east leg of the intersection. Regardless of the

model, additional capacity north is important to alleviate interchange impacts given other limited State programmed improvements to both Meridian Road and the Eagle Road interchange.

If ACHD is set on widening this intersection now to a full buildout configuration, the City requests ACHD design the Locust Grove and Amity intersection for Locust Grove to be 5-lanes north in the future. If not constructed now as part of the project, the plans should identify and include the future expansion opportunity fully engineered and considering all existing and future conditions, traffic speeds, and safety precautions.

When design originally started, a roundabout at Amity and Eagle was to be planned for future expansion, but because approach and exit angles were not adequately considered in relation to traffic speeds, the entire intersection had to be demolished and shifted. The City had provided comments to this effect prior to the second redesign. Due to the original design shortcoming, the new project negatively impacted multiple properties that received entitlements after the original design and which should have supported an ultimate configuration. The City does not want to see existing stakeholders impacted any more than necessary for this additional expansion. Further, the City does not want to see any one, or group of, stakeholder(s) disproportionately impacted for greater benefit of others, nor does the City want to see short-term decisions negatively impact more future stakeholders for the life of the improvements.

Finally, the current design status of the intersection project creates concerns for school safety, which has been a topic of joint concern for both ACHD and the City. The City would like to see improved connectivity from the intersection to Mary McPherson elementary school. Additional subdivisions are filling in to the north and east, and this intersection project, as proposed for ultimate build, is well suited to make significant safety improvements now, rather than creating additional construction impacts later. While the City appreciates the extruded curb design effort to the school, this seems like an inappropriate half-way approach. During the project scoping and intersection analysis phase previously, the City and ACHD seemed to agree that a sidewalk was warranted; the City supports the sidewalk concept to improve future safe route opportunities and general pedestrian safety.

We recognize and appreciate that this project is now at 50% design, and we are sharing our concerns as quickly as possible. Due to some delays in communication, we have just recently learned of the changes in the design concept. Due to these changes and the concerns stated, **the City requests:**

- ACHD reconsider the design of this intersection to
 - revert to an interim intersection design with future phased efforts to better accommodate the concerns expressed, or
 - in current format, accommodate additional future lanes on Locust Grove Road to the north, with minimal and proportionate impacts to all stakeholders;
- include improved safe pedestrian connectivity to Mary McPherson Elementary School;
- modify the master street map to preserve Locust Grove for 5-lanes north of Amity Road to Victory Road.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter. If there are any questions, please feel free to contact Brian McClure at 208-884-5533.

Sincerely,



Robert E. Simison
Mayor



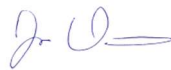
Brad Hoaglund
City Council President



Joe Borton
City Council Vice President



Luke Cavener
Council Member



John Overton
Council Member



Jessica Perreault
Council Member

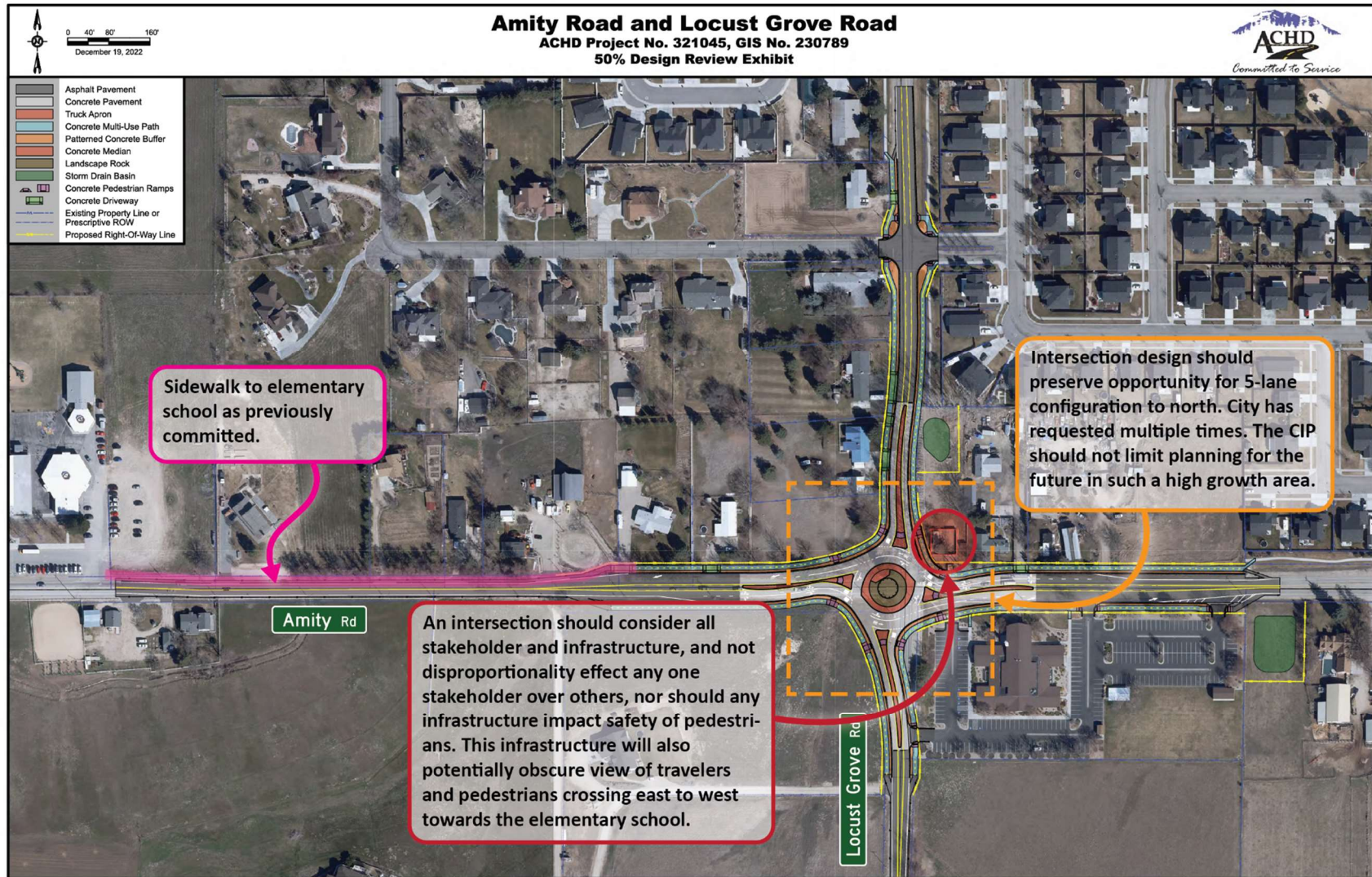


Liz Strader
Council Member

Encl: Exhibit of City Requests

Cc: Ada County Commissioners
Bruce Wong, Director, Ada County Highway District
David Rader, Senior Project Manager, Capital Projects
Mayor Stear, City of Kuna
Caleb Hood, Planning Division Manager
Brian McClure, Comprehensive Associate Planner
Miranda Carson, Comprehensive Associate Coordination Planner

Enclosure: Exhibit of City Requests (RE: Locust Grove X Amity Intersection Design)



Idaho Avenue Downtown Request

I received a call from Marty Schindler; he owns a business at 126 Idaho Avenue. Mr. Schindler requested information about future construction plans by ACHD and the City Public Works team in his area.

Woodbridge HOA Request for Cut Through Data

A Woodbridge HOA member requested up to date, current traffic counts down in Woodbridge as they are observing the cut thru traffic is increasing. There was no request for improvements or traffic calming; only data was requested. I directed the resident that John Wasson would be the best contact for that, and that ACHD typically asks for the request to come through the TellUs system for tracking. <https://www.achdidaho.org/AboutACHD/contactUs.aspx>

Reference Data Resources

For your refence I wanted to share 3 data resources I was sent this month.

ITD Numetric Map: https://itd.aashtowaresafety.net/itd-safety-dashboards#/?view_id=2

ITD Numetric Dashboard: https://itd.aashtowaresafety.net/itd-safety-dashboards#/?view_id=1

COMPASS Intelligent Transportation Systems Inventory (Included RRFBs and HAWKs):
<https://compassidaho.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=28d0a27a987b423a995ecd12fe5f00ca>
