

19 July 2022



Via Email To: ebautista@achdidaho.org, projects@achdidaho.org,

Cc: City of Boise: Karen Gallagher, Dave Rader, Crystal Rain

Re: Barber Valley Transportation Plan – BVNA Inputs to ACHD Request for Feedback

Mr. Bautista,

Thank you for your leadership on the ACHD project to develop a transportation plan for the Barber Valley. We offer the Barber Valley Neighborhood Association Board approved feedback below, for the second public comment period which was conducted from 29 June to 13 July. We are an elected board that speaks for the approximately 7,000 residents of our neighborhood and we hope that our perspective will inform your planning efforts. The City of Boise established and financially supports Neighborhood Associations (NAs) for this very purpose – providing government agencies a citizen perspective from elected neighbors that prioritize issues for the benefit of their neighborhood. We work very hard to ensure we are providing feedback that reflects what is best, from our perspective, for the entire neighborhood. Please consider the following comments from the BVNA Board.

1) Survey Administration

- a) Thank you for the extra effort to employ sandwich boards – they attracted 68% of the 333 respondents and we know that involved extra effort on the part of ACHD staff.
- b) There appears to be significantly less public feedback for this second comment period. We suggest that is the unfortunate result of a short two-week comment period that included the Fourth of July holiday during a typically busy family vacation period. We would certainly support another two-week comment period to gain more community input.
- c) The functionality of the survey software, especially as it relates to identifying priority projects, appears to be problematic. We noticed several neighbor comments on unrelated projects and noted that the user interface when prioritizing projects was not intuitive.

2) Public Feedback Summary

- a) Questions 1 and 2 clearly established that everyone that responded to this survey drives in the Barber Valley (96%) yet 75% of those neighbors wish to expand their walk, bike, or transit usage. We are a neighborhood, like most in the City, that clearly does not support additional auto-centric development within the ACHD right of way and we urge ACHD to develop a more active transportation infrastructure that encourages multi-modal transportation.

3) Proposed Project Prioritization – Warm Springs Avenue, Eckert Rd / HWY21

- a) The BVNA Board of Directors reviewed the entire project list from ACHD and amongst the proposed sidewalk, bicycle, crossing, and roadway projects **determined the highest priority project for our neighborhood would be the roadway improvements described as “enhanced bicycle and pedestrian improvements with planned roadway widening” on Warm Springs Avenue between Eckert Road and State Highway 21.**
- b) We understand this to mean a major roadway project that would re-design the public right of way to accommodate all users and employ the ACHD Livable Streets Performance Measures.
- c) We also wish to emphasize that we DO NOT SUPPORT the typical “roadway widening” as the public often perceives this terminology and as some survey respondents did in their comments. We strongly advocate that this “roadway widening” project would preserve the existing two

motor vehicle travel lanes in a redesigned corridor that would also include traffic calming measures integrated with protected bicycle and pedestrian facilities. This would NOT include additional motor vehicle travel lanes but would include a center left-turn lane where appropriate.

- d) We have included as an attachment our 12 March 2021 letter to ACHD where we described this as our highest priority community program project for the Integrated Five-Year Work Plan.

4) **BNVA Comments by project category**

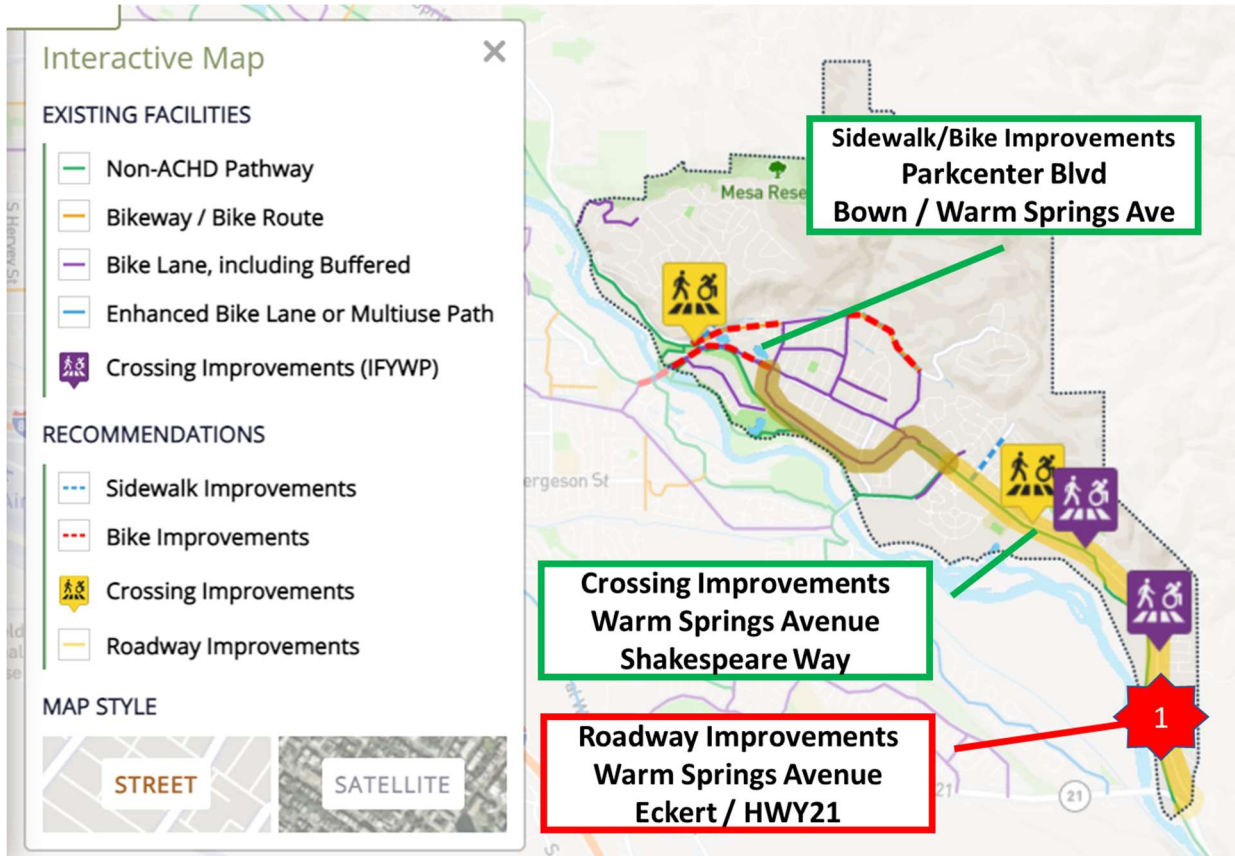
- a) **Sidewalk Improvements.** The highest priority *sidewalk* project for BVNA would be a combined bike/ped project on Parkcenter Blvd from Bown Way to Warm Springs Avenue which would deliver “enhanced sidewalks on both sides of Parkcenter Blvd; more separation from roadway”.
- i) We believe this project could be a relatively straight-forward effort immediately benefiting the largest number of our neighbors. The current roadway design encourages higher vehicle speeds and a project to install protected bicycle and pedestrian facilities is our number two priority.
- b) **Bicycle Improvements.** As stated above, the highest priority *bicycle/sidewalk* project should be enhanced bicycle (and pedestrian) facilities on Parkcenter Blvd from Bown Way to Warm Springs Avenue.
- c) **Crossing Improvements.** The proposed enhanced crossing of Warm Springs Avenue at Starview Drive is already a requirement of the City of Boise Development Agreement for Boulder Heights Estates. As such, soliciting public input for a project that is already entitled is confusing. Therefore, the proposed crossing of Warm Springs at the Idaho Shakespeare Festival entrance is the only project proposed, and we support this crossing.
- i) BVNA suggests there are many other crossings in the Barber Valley that should be considered, not the least of which is a crossing of Harris Ranch Road at the west entrance to the Spring Creek neighborhood at Timbersaw Drive. This would improve crossing safety to the multi-use path that permits access to/from Harris Ranch and the new elementary school.
- d) **Roadway Improvements.** As stated in our introduction, the Warm Springs corridor between Eckert Road and HWY21 is our highest priority. This section of Warm Springs has extensive sidewalks gaps on the east side of the road and extremely limited sidewalk on the west side of the roadway (in the vicinity of Skybar Avenue only). Additionally, there are no bicycle facilities on this section of roadway.

5) **Closing Comments.**

- a) *ACHD Bike Facilities Are not “Fair” or “Excellent”.* Question 3 from the first public comment period established that bike facilities in the Barber Valley are “fair” (56%) or “excellent” (33%). However, we suggest that this relatively strong public perception is skewed by the fact that the Greenbelt is a major multi-modal link in our neighborhood. ACHD should not interpret that the bicycle facilities on the ACHD right of way are “fair” or “excellent” as this public response may indicate, and we hope that this public misperception does not inappropriately influence how ACHD views the need for improved bike facilities on Warm Springs Avenue in the Barber Valley, which are lacking.
- b) *The Greenbelt Should Be Complemented By an Improved Warm Springs Corridor.* The Greenbelt only provides some connectivity and is only open from sunrise to sunset. The ACHD rights of way must supplement the Greenbelt to truly connect our neighborhood. We believe that improving ACHD bicycle facilities in the Barber Valley, especially on Warm Springs, will encourage more bicyclists to use the ACHD right of way rather than the Greenbelt, which will

improve safety for all users by reducing the growing Greenbelt conflicts between bicyclists and pedestrians.

- c) *Project Map Feedback*. The project map below is annotated with a summary of our feedback. Our highest priority project is roadway improvements to Warm Springs Avenue. We also support a combined sidewalk/bicycle project for Parkcenter Blvd from the Parkcenter bridge (Bown Crossing) to the Warm Springs Avenue roundabout at the Harris Ranch fire station along with a pedestrian crossing of Warm Springs Avenue at Shakespeare Way.



We look forward to future opportunities to provide feedback to the Barber Valley Transportation Plan.

Respectfully,

Barber Valley Neighborhood Association Board

Officers

John Mooney Jr, President
Rob Stark, Vice President
Gary Veasy, Secretary
Katie Swain, Treasurer

Directors

Larry Crowley
John Hall
Nathan Hallam
Zach Piepmeyer
Courtney Santillan
Roy Tweedle

Attachment: IFYWP Community Program Project Request – Barber Valley Neighborhood Association (E. Warm Springs Avenue Corridor)

12 March 2021



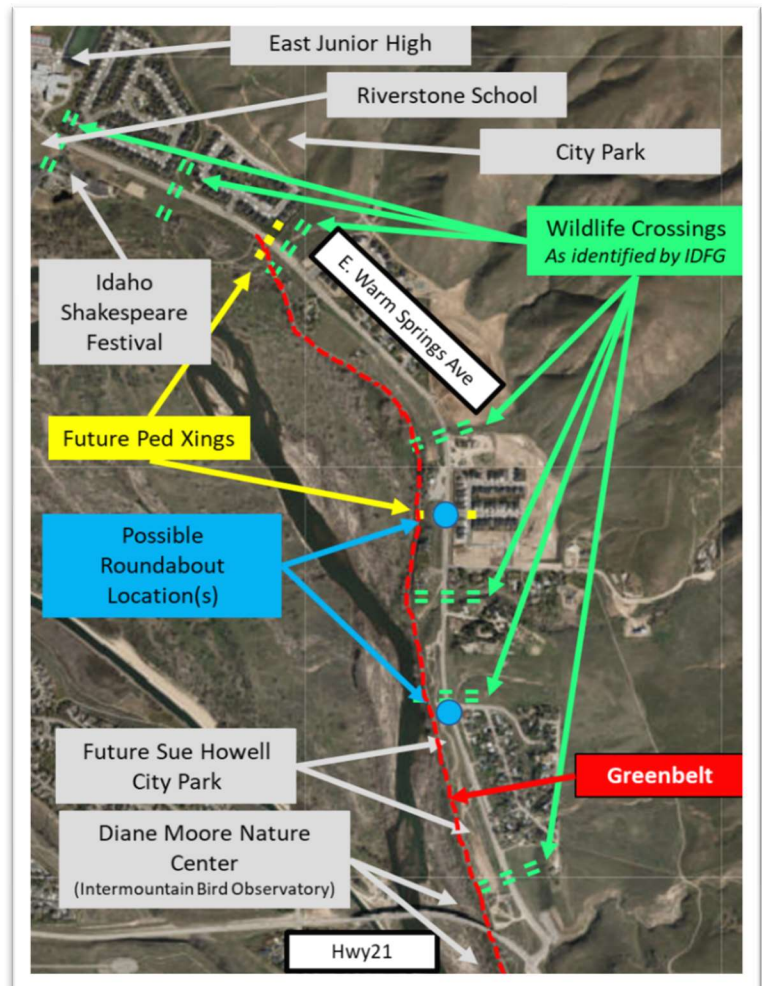
ACHD District 1 Commissioner Jim Hansen; Via email: jhansen@achdidaho.org
ACHD Planning and Programming (IFYWP); Via email: kinselmann@achdidaho.org
City of Boise Transportation Staff: Karen Gallagher; Via email: kgallagher@cityofboise.org

IFYWP Community Program Project Request – Barber Valley Neighborhood Association (E. Warm Springs Avenue Corridor)

Commissioner Hansen,

The Barber Valley Neighborhood Association is requesting the addition of a phased project in the ACHD Integrated Five-Year Work Plan to rehabilitate the E. Warm Springs Avenue corridor between Eckert Road and State Highway 21. As you know, Warm Springs Avenue was formerly a state highway and was designed for high-speed motor vehicle traffic. It now bisects our neighborhood and serves as a minor residential arterial with a road design incompatible with a number of pedestrian, bicycle, and wildlife crossings. We believe a project to gradually convert Warm Springs into a livable residential street is required. We propose a phased plan:

1. Determine if the Federal Capital Maintenance Project of Warm Springs (FAO2212) is warranted at this time given the need to design a streetscape that reduces motor vehicle speeds in this corridor (i.e., will a pavement rehabilitation project preclude future streetscape improvements?).
2. **Crossings.** Enhanced pedestrian crossings are currently planned at two locations and preliminary infrastructure is already in place (E. Skybar St and S. Maynard Ave). Install these crossings as soon as possible. While awaiting permanent installation of these enhanced crossings, we will work with ACHD and the City to install temporary facilities at these crossings to inform and habituate motor vehicle operators of the upcoming changes.
3. **Conduct a Corridor Study.** Fund an ACHD project to recommend changes to the Warm Springs corridor streetscape that will serve to lower motor vehicle speeds and improve crossing safety. Our vision would be as depicted in the graphic to the right which would include roundabouts, sidewalks, chicane treatments to break up sections of the corridor, bulbouts to further improve crossing safety, and multi-jurisdictional plans to vacate the right of way at the south end of the corridor to support the future Sue Howell City Park and the Diane Moore Nature Center.



Background. The City of Boise Barber Valley Specific Plan includes a traffic impact study conducted in 2007 with a number of corridor improvements suggested at that time that remain valid today – streetscape improvements engineered to convert Warm Springs to a minor residential arterial (starting on page 328 of 406 at this [City of Boise link](#)). The developer (Brighton) also completed a corridor plan which is attached for reference. Additionally, there is extensive unused right of way at the south end of the corridor that accommodated an Idaho Transportation Department weigh station and the construction of the Highway 21 bridge over the Boise River. This right of way should be evaluated to maximize the public benefit which could involve vacating the right of way to the City to expand the planned park facilities (Sue Howell park and the Diane Moore Nature Center). A chicane treatment in this area would seem to be very feasible and reduce motorist sight lines which would contribute to lower vehicle speeds.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns and our vision of an improved Warm Springs Corridor.

Barber Valley Neighborhood Association Board

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Gary Veasy, Secretary
Hank Vincent, Treasurer

Directors

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Nathan Hallam
Katherine Nice
Courtney Santillan
Rob Stark
Katie Swain

Copies (via email)
City Council
ACHD Commissioners

Attached (electronic):
“The Avenue” Neighborhood Plan (East Warm Springs Avenue Eckert to Highland Valley), Brighton Corporation, June 2009