

Highland Cove Protection Association, Inc.  
PO Box 9165  
Boise, ID 83707

Highlands Neighborhood Association  
301 E. Chardie  
Boise, ID 83707

July 30, 2015

Ada County Highway District  
Attn: Commissioners  
3775 Adams Street  
Boise, ID 83714

Dear President Hansen and Commissioners Arnold, Baker, Goldthorpe, and Woods:

As residents of Highland View Drive, we present the enclosed petition respectfully requesting the Commission to reclassify Highland View Drive, *in its entirety*, to a "local street. Presently, Highland View Drive is classified as a collector roadway from Parkhill up to Selkirk Drive.<sup>1</sup> North of Selkirk Drive, Highland View Drive is classified as a local street.<sup>2</sup> Reclassification of all of Highland View Drive will, pursuant to ACHD Policy Manual § 7207, allow only conscientious development, if any, that will maintain ADT less than 2,000. This petition is in direct response to proposed development and the public safety risk on Highland View Drive. The homeowners on Highland View Drive had no prior awareness of the 2010 threshold adjustment increasing allowable traffic to 5,000 ADT which was made without consideration being given to the generally recognized substandard nature of the road.

The petition has the signatures of over 90 percent of the residents of Highland View Drive, exceeding the required 75 percent for demonstrating neighborhood consensus. In granting the petition to reclassify all of Highland View Drive, we ask you to consider the following:

1. Highland View Drive is a substandard residential collector, in an R-1B zone.<sup>3</sup>

- "Highland View Drive was approved and developed 40 to 50 years ago when standards of land development were substantially different than they are today. It was also developed without an approved master plan of the overall planned development. As a result, it has many more front-on lots than would be approved today as a residential street of its length."<sup>4</sup>
- Highland View Drive was "constructed without sidewalks, something that was allowed at that time." "It would be virtually impossible to retro-fit the street with sidewalks, both because of the topography of the area and the extensive landscaping that now occupies the right of way where the sidewalks should be."<sup>5</sup>
- "Therefore, pedestrians using this street have to walk in the street and will always be at more risk" than on residential streets built to current standards, with sidewalks.<sup>6</sup>
- For this reason, ACHD staff recommended "the street should not be allowed to significantly exceed 2,000 trips per day for the upper reaches of Highland View Drive."<sup>7</sup>
- Due to the dangers posed by increased traffic, ACHD staff also advised that "the District and Boise City should strongly consider not allowing additional development east of this parcel that would direct traffic to Highland View Drive."<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Letter from Christy Little, Planning Review Supervisor, ACHD, to ACHD Commission, Director Bruce S. Wong (June 16, 2015).

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> The Highlands, Inc., RZ-18-96/DA 6 (ACHD Nov. 13, 1996).

<sup>4</sup> The Highlands, Inc., RZ-18-96/DA 6, ¶ J.

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

<sup>6</sup> *Id.*

<sup>7</sup> *Id.*

<sup>8</sup> The Highlands, Inc., RZ-18-96/DA 6, ¶ K.

- Highland View Drive ends with an unimproved culdesac and also has a stub street off of Chardie. Neither is installed with a sign stating that “THIS ROADWAY WILL BE EXTENDED IN THE FUTURE,” as required by ACHD Policy Manual § 7207.2.4(3).

## 2. Highland View Drive’s classification was changed in 2010.<sup>9</sup>

- Prior to December 2010, ACHD’s policy manual classified Highland View Drive as a “residential collector” with a maximum recommended 2,000 vehicle trips per day.
- Beginning in 2008, ACHD sent a draft of policy manual updates to stakeholders—which it defined as engineers, architects, developers, lead land use engineers, attorneys, etc. Access management was identified as an area of concern by this group, and ACHD met in the summer/fall of 2008 and winter of 2009 with a working group to revise the policy.
- The working group consisted of members of the development community and the lead land use agencies who were expressly invited to take part in these policy discussions. This gave them a significant advantage to shape policy outcomes.
- Following input from the development community and land use agencies, the ACHD policy manual was reorganized by roadway classification and certain classifications were dropped in favor of broader classifications. The classification “residential collector” was dropped in favor of simply “collector” with the distinction of front-on housing or not. With the policy manual change, Highland View Drive became a “collector” with front-on housing, allowing average daily traffic of 5,000 cars.
- The ACHD policy manual updates were adopted by the Commission on Dec. 15, 2010 at a public hearing and became ordinance no. 211.
- Aside from notice of the public hearing, Highland View residents had no way of knowing about the street classification change. The significance of the policy manual changes could only be known by members of the working group.

## 3. Highland View Drive meets the definition of a “local street.”

- Per ACHD’s definitions in the Transportation Land Use Implementation Plan, the definition of collectors are roads “that connect arterials and provide direct access to schools and shopping.” Highland View connects to only one arterial (15<sup>th</sup> Street) and does not provide direct access to either a school or shopping area. The definition of local/residential streets is “smaller roadways that serve homes and neighborhoods.”<sup>10</sup> The definition of a “local street” is a better descriptor of Highland View Drive’s function than “collector.”
- In its comments on the 2010 ACHD Policy Manual update, the City of Boise noted that: “The proposed access management policies are a good first step and are appropriate for greenfield development, but do not reflect the finer grain of a developed urban street system.”<sup>11</sup>
- Highland View Drive is an example of how the broad, functional classifications adopted in the ACHD Policy Manual do not reflect the reality of older streets developed prior to current land development standards and without the benefit of a master plan.

## 4. ACHD Commission has authority and responsibility to reclassify streets according to their primary function.

- ACHD’s Principles of Access Management require a specialized roadway system, recognizing that “[d]ifferent types of roadways serve different functions. It is important to design and manage roadways according to the primary functions that they are expected to serve.”<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Based on documents obtained from ACHD per a public records request (June 29, 2015).

<sup>10</sup> [www.achdidaho.org/departments/PP/Docs/TLIP/TLIP\\_cities\\_discussion\\_draft/Displays/Definitions.pdf](http://www.achdidaho.org/departments/PP/Docs/TLIP/TLIP_cities_discussion_draft/Displays/Definitions.pdf).

<sup>11</sup> Letter from Mayor Dave Bieter, City of Boise, to Sherry Huber, ACHD President (Dec. 15, 2010).

<sup>12</sup> ACHD, Ordinance No. 211 § 7202.3 (2010).

- ACHD legal counsel confirmed at a June 24, 2015 public hearing that the Commission has the authority to reclassify streets. Director Wong has also stated in an email to Highland View Neighborhood Association President, Phillippe Masser, that the Commission has authority to reclassify streets.
- “ACHD requirements are intended to assure that the proposed use/development will not place an undue burden on the existing vehicular transportation system within the vicinity impacted by the proposed development.”<sup>13</sup>
- ACHD’s most recent traffic impact study put the traffic count on lower Highland View Drive at 3,390 vehicles per day<sup>14</sup>, exceeding ACHD’s recommended number of cars for a new collector street meeting all safety criteria. Yet, Highland View is an older, neighborhood street without standard safety features.
- Reclassifying Highland View Drive in its entirety to a “local street” with an allowable level of service of 2,000 cars per day reflects the substandard nature of the street, the definitions outlined in the Master Street Map and Transportation Land Use Implementation Plan, and ACHD’s authority and responsibility to not place an undue burden on the existing transportation system.

Accordingly, please initiate a proceeding for the reclassification requested in this letter and supported by the enclosed petition. Please note that reclassification of Highland View Drive may impact the development application for the Highlands Cove Subdivision/BOI15-0160/SUB15-00020/PUD15-0004. In the interest of fulfilling administrative procedures ACHD should hold that application in abeyance pending review of this requested reclassification.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Richardson, President  
Highland Cove Protection Association, Inc.

Phillipe Masser, President  
Highlands Neighborhood Association

cc: Bruce Wong  
Christy Little  
Leon Letson  
Steve Lord  
Joy Vega

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<sup>13</sup> Letter from Christy Little, Planning Review Supervisor, ACHD, to ACHD Commission, Director Bruce S. Wong (June 16, 2015), enclosure Conclusions of Law, DRAFT Highlands Cove/BOI 15-0160/SUB15-00020 18.

<sup>14</sup> *Id.* at 8.