

**To: Bingham County Planning & Zoning Commission**  
**Re: Opposition to North River Estates Subdivision**  
**Date: 12/3/2024**

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my concerns in opposition, based on the current level of information provided, to the proposed North River Estates Subdivision. In general, I'm supportive of growth and development in our communities, and when done correctly can improve the sense of community where we live. However, based on the lack information and clarity provided around critical issues outlined below I would strongly suggest the P&Z Board requires the developer, Rockwell Homes, Inc., to complete additional due diligence and provide further clarification and remedies to the critical items identified. The areas of concern are; access and road infrastructure, impact to pedestrian safety, and shared irrigation resources.

### **Access & Road Infrastructure**

The developer of North River Estates has proposed one new access point onto a main county road N 800 E New Sweden Road. This road acts as a main artery into and out of the City of Shelley and surrounding areas. Over the last couple years, I have personally witnessed multiple major crashes at the intersection of N 800 E and W 81<sup>st</sup> S, this additional traffic load will only further those risks. This road is extremely busy during the peak hours of the days. I would request the County and Developer further research the traffic patterns through a traffic study and implement recommendations to reduce the risk of additional accidents.

In addition, the 2<sup>nd</sup> access on 1560 N Jack Rabbit Drive into the Cedars community is introducing a major risk of potential accidents and injury/fatalities to those who live in the Cedars Estate community. This is exacerbated by the Private Access Easement extending easterly from 800 E New Sweden road that is currently utilized by heavy commercial trucks to haul material into a fill pit located at 1551 N 800 E Shelley, ID 83274, RP0448202. By connecting the North River Estates to the Cedars Estates, it will create a path of least resistance for heavy commercial trucks to utilize the route via 1460 N Jack Rabbit to 835 E or 845 E in order to access 81<sup>st</sup> South. As called out in Exhibit T-1 P&Z Staff Report, the issue with private access easements is the inability to control the number of lots using it, I would further expand that to include the number and type of vehicles utilizing the private easement. Essentially connecting the communities would create endless risk to commercial dump trucks using the Cedars streets as main access streets to their fill pit. The only way to ensure this will not be an unnecessary risk and burden to the Cedars community would be to have the communities remain disconnected. The developers of River Estates should be required to work with the private road easement owners to find a reasonable solution to retain this commercial traffic within their own community. Ideally a mutual solution that would utilize and convert the private road easement into the 2<sup>nd</sup> access point to North River Estates should be considered.

### **Pedestrian Safety Concerns**

The proposed connection access point via the 1560 N Jack Rabbit Drive to the Cedars Estates will create an increased risk of accidents and potential traffic by utilizing a Cedar Estates community street (N 835 E) and (N 845 E) as a main access street for residents living in the proposed North River Estates Subdivision.

This concern is supported by the lack of county requirement for sidewalks and street lighting, in addition to the narrow streets. Connecting North River Estates would introduce unplanned and increased traffic through our community, endangering residents, especially children who use the streets for biking, scootering, and other activities. The absence of dedicated pedestrian infrastructure magnifies the risk of accidents and potential fatalities. The sentiment in the Exhibit A-2 in the Access and Transportation section that this interconnectivity of communities will be an improvement is not a shared sentiment by many Cedar Estate Community members.

### **Traffic Study Considerations**

During the planning of Phase 4 of The Cedars, a traffic study was required by the County. This study led to road improvements at the intersection of County Road and New Sweden Road, underscoring the potential impact of increased traffic. The proposed new subdivision should likely demand similar assessments and interventions, which should be carefully evaluated.

### **Shared Irrigation Infrastructure**

The existing pressurized irrigation system that supports The Cedars Estates was developed, is owned, and is maintained by The Cedars HOA. The proposed plan for North River Estates to utilize this infrastructure raises concerns about clear delineation around the maintenance, safety and improvements required to this shared space. The maintenance and costs of this infrastructure should not fall on the shoulders of The Cedars residents. North River Estates should be required to independently invest in and manage its irrigation infrastructure to ensure sustainability. Further clarification should be required prior to any approvals.

In conclusion, the proposed Subdivision, North River Estates creates a number of risks that need to be further researched and mitigated prior to the Board Commissions recommendation to approve. As noted in the P&Z Staff Report Exhibit S-1, Bingham County Code Section 10-14-4(B) under section F, that safety considerations must be considered as part of the decision-making process. The issues expressed above; undue risks to pedestrians, compromised road safety, delineated use and financial support of shared resources, falls under those criteria. I urge the Planning & Zoning Commission to consider these critical issues and postpone this decision until further solutions can be provided by the developer, Rockwell Homes, Inc., in favor of maintaining the safety and well-being of residents impacted by this proposed new subdivision.

Thank you for considering this testimony.

Sincerely,



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