

# NEWS



3775 Adams  
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## ADA COUNTY HIGHWAY DISTRICT

January 4, 2012

Information Contact:  
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### **District Marks 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with History Video about Formation**

Ever wonder why there is an Ada County Highway District?

Potholes.

Fed up with bad roads they spent too much to maintain, voters overwhelmingly approved a new agency to oversee all of Ada County's local roads. The move was approved at the polls in May 1971 and took legal effect in January of the following year when ACHD began to operate.

A 14-minute video, "If These Roads Could Talk," explores the reasons and politics behind the creation of ACHD 40 years ago. The piece features interviews with local architect Charles Hummel and former Boise Mayor and City Councilman Dick Eardley. Local historian Susan Stacy also provides perspective, and the video includes a number of vintage photos of the county's past road problems.

The video and other information about ACHD is available on the District's web site, [www.achdidaho.org](http://www.achdidaho.org).

A special election occurred in 1971 after the Idaho Legislature approved a bill allowing voters in a county of 75,000 or more residents to decide if they wanted to move all city and county road functions under a new agency.

At the time, roads that were potholed, cracking and generally falling apart in the cities and an inequity in road funding provided the motivation for change. City residents, who struggled with bad roads, paid property taxes to their city and to Ada County, which was not obliged to spend road funds inside city limits. The result: Wonderful rural roads with little traffic and pavement turning back into gravel inside many cities.

“We were going nowhere with regard to street planning and improvements,” said Hummel, a founder of Idaho Smart Growth, a planning advocacy group. “Putting the entire county and all its towns into one street and highway district was the solution – and still is today.

“You don’t hear about potholes very much anymore,” Hummel said. “I’m very pleased with the way the district is being operated now.”

As a City Councilman, Eardley strongly opposed the creation of ACHD, despite the admittedly sad shape of the local infrastructure.

“Every city had its own street department and the county had its own highway department,” Eardley said. “The biggest change that I think anybody saw in the next few years was the improvement of the roads. Because the highway district was able to coordinate everything better, there was more money in the pot . . . and this way it was able to do a major job of bringing the roads up to standards in Boise, as well as keeping the county roads decent.”

Eardley said that he’s happy with the way things have played out over the last four decades.

“It’s one of the, maybe the first time and only time, that I was adamantly opposed to something as a member of the City Council and few years later, decided I was completely wrong,” Eardley said. “And I’m happy to admit it today.”

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April 27, 2014

Information Contact:  
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### **ACHD pilot project to test if public wants to swap traffic lanes on Capitol Boulevard, Main and Idaho streets for bike lanes**

ACHD crews will begin work Monday evening to erase existing lane lines on Capitol Boulevard and replace them with a new striping layout that includes a buffered bike lane – an area for cyclists separated from motorized traffic.

Once work is finished on Capitol, crews will move to Idaho and Main streets with a goal of having the full conversion in place for the test to begin on Thursday, May 1, 2014.

ACHD plans for the pilot to run at least one month.

“The question is, are those affected willing to accept the tradeoffs?” said Mitchell Jaurena, ACHD vice president.

Following an open house on the proposal in March, some 600 people commented on the plan, with two-thirds in support. Although the amount of feedback from the public to date has been good, the ACHD Commission wants to know if the general public truly favors the change before making any permanent alterations, Jaurena said.

Converting the vehicle lanes into bicycle lanes on the key streets could make Boise’s urban core more inviting to riders and promote Boise City’s goals for the downtown.

But motorists will notice more crowded commutes – particularly at rush hours.

In addition to the increased traffic congestion, 96 parking spaces will be lost on Main and Idaho streets during the test – an indication of the impact of the permanent change. Capitol Boulevard will gain 17 spaces as part of the pilot project.

ACHD and Boise planners believe demand exists for safer bicycling routes between downtown and Boise State University – and from east-to-west across downtown.

“This test is important because it will let everybody see exactly what making this change permanent would mean for motorists, bicyclists, pedestrians and downtown businesses,” Jaurena said.

Boise Mayor David Bieter and the City Council have endorsed the change.

The public can say tell ACHD what it thinks of the proposal starting Thursday, May 1, 2014, by going to [www.achdidaho.org](http://www.achdidaho.org) and taking the online survey. Citizens can call or e-mail ACHD but the online survey will allow the District to best track and evaluate the public reaction.

Besides the public opinion, ACHD will also measure traffic congestion, trip delays, use of the new lanes by cyclists, and gather feedback from Boise City, the Capital City Development Corporation, downtown businesses and other interested parties.

More information is available about the project on ACHD’s web site, [www.achdidaho.org](http://www.achdidaho.org).

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## ADA COUNTY HIGHWAY DISTRICT

August 14, 2014

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### **ACHD Commission to consider 2015 budget on August 26<sup>th</sup>**

**Garden City** – Mindful of the still-slack economy, ACHD Commissioners will consider a nearly \$97 million budget on August 26, 2014 that they say meets Ada County's transportation needs but remains kind to taxpayers.

For the sixth year running, Commissioners will deliberate on a spending plan that keeps the base property tax at the same level; for the second year, Commissioners will vote on a draft budget that would tax growth (the value of newly improved properties) in the overall tax roll, which would raise an additional \$970,000.

"We want to keep taxes as low as possible and still meet the critical needs," said John Franden, ACHD president. "This budget invests in Ada County's economy with \$45 million in new projects, while ensuring that the potholes are filled and the signals are timed."

By law, the Commission can consider up to a three-percent increase in the property tax rate, plus the annual amount for growth.

The adoption hearing will be in the ACHD Auditorium, 3775 Adams St., in Garden City at 6 p.m. on August 26, 2014. That is a special date for the hearing, which usually coincides with regular Wednesday evening Commission meeting. The change will accommodate Commissioner travel schedules, assuring all five are present to vote. The regular August 27<sup>th</sup> meeting is cancelled.

The draft budget is available on ACHD's web site, [www.achdidaho.org](http://www.achdidaho.org). Anyone wishing to submit written comments can send them to 3775 Adams St., Garden City, ID 83714 or to [tellus@achdidaho.org](mailto:tellus@achdidaho.org). Please get your comments in at least a day or two before the meeting to allow Commissioners time to consider your views. The public is also welcome to testify at the hearing.

Property taxes represent the largest revenue source for ACHD (\$33.2 million), followed by state gas taxes (\$21.2 million), development impact fees (\$13 million) and vehicle registration fees (\$9.2 million).

Some of the major construction projects in the 2015 budget include:

- **Avenue E, South End to West 4<sup>th</sup> Street** – \$226,000 – Build sidewalks, bike lanes, and curbs and gutters to fill gaps and increase safety on West Main Street, North Avenue E and Bridge Avenue in Kuna.
- **Bogus Basin Road Improvements** – \$2.8 million – Resurface and improve Bogus Basin from Milepost 3 to Milepost 9 to increase safety, including additional guardrails, turnouts and signage.
- **Downtown Boise Implementation Plan** – \$2.7 million – Resurface and convert some streets from one-way to two-way operation and add bicycle facilities in conjunction with Boise City and the Capitol City Development Corp.
- **Eagle Road/McMillan Road Intersection** – \$2.9 million – Rebuild and widen intersection to increase capacity and safety, including improved sidewalks and bike lanes.
- **Floating Feather Road, Meridian Road to Ballantyne Lane** – \$500,000 – Build a five-foot-wide sidewalk on the north side of road and widen road shoulder for bike lanes to increase safety and connectivity around Eagle Middle School and Eagle High School.
- **Fairview Avenue, East of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street to Locust Grove Road** – \$297,000 – Fill sidewalk gaps on north and south side of road to improve safety and connectivity.
- **Franklin Road, Black Cat to Ten Mile roads, and the Franklin/Black Cat intersection** – \$3.1 million – Widen road to five lanes with sidewalk, bike lanes, curbs and gutters to improve safety and capacity.
- **Hill Road Extension** – \$4.4 million – Widen road to three lanes and extend west to Old State Street; project to include sidewalks, bike lanes, curbs, gutters, and new bridges at Edgewood and on Hill and includes medians to be landscaped in the future.
- **Lake Hazel Extension** – \$650,000 – Extend road with two lanes from South Solar Way to Cole Road.
- **McMillan Road, Locust Grove Road to State Highway 55 (Eagle Road)** – \$1.5 million – Widen road to five lanes with sidewalk, bike lanes, curbs and gutters, retaining as much existing sidewalk as feasible to improve safety and capacity.
- **Owyhee Street, Malad Street to Overland Road** – \$442,000 – Replace and rehab deteriorating sidewalks and fill gaps to improve safety for Whitney Elementary and South Jr. High students.

- **Shamrock Bikeway** – \$255,000 – From De Meyer Street to Executive Drive, build new, 10 path on unopened right-of-way, new pedestrian crossing at Fairview and Shamrock and add way-finding signage.
- **Ten Mile Road, Cherry Lane to Ustick Road** – \$3.2 million – Widen road to four or five lanes, depending on the section, adding sidewalk, bike lanes, curbs and gutters. Build an emergency signal and a pedestrian signal at Teter Street.

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