

Nampa clears way for 8,400 new homes

Sewer deal may spur growth northward

By Dan Black - Idaho Press-Tribune, March 8 2006

NAMPA — The Nampa City Council has agreed to work with a group of developers to extend sewer capacity north of the city, opening up an area where 8,400 homes are expected to be built during the next several years.

The city had already allocated \$1.2 million for a sewer line north from the city's wastewater treatment plant to the Birch Drainage. Developers wanted to foot the rest of the bill. That agreement would allow officials to quickly build the sewer line and a large pump station. Consequently, that could bring a flood of new subdivisions.

Nampa Planning Director Norm Holm said most of the acreage in the area has already been annexed and zoned mostly for low-density, single-family homes, with some commercial sites mixed in places.

The area involved is in the Birch Drainage, which is roughly south of Cherry Lane, east of Franklin Boulevard and west of Can-Ada Road.

Homebuyers in new neighborhoods would pay the city and the developers for sewer connections, which would cover the initial investment. A total cost of the sewer improvement has not been determined because the project has not been put out for bid.

Developers eager to build

City Attorney Terry White told Nampa council members he met with developers Friday, and they were eager to forge an agreement.

It will allow the sewer to be built more quickly and cheaply than if the city financed the sewer through a local improvement district, White said.

"They are prepared to get going," he said.

Paul Raymond, Nampa's public works director, said he will send a letter to all interested developers to announce that his office will accept plats after one week.

A plat is essentially a map that shows how land is legally divided.

The move by the city will give developers a chance to all file for plats at once, with no one getting early, preferential treatment. That means all their plats will likely be ready for market roughly at the same time.

Platting is a legal step required before companies can develop and sell properties.

"We'll see a heap of plats on our desk," Raymond said.

More growth ahead

Developers have asked for a similar arrangement with sewer lines in the Purdam Drainage, north of Cherry Lane, but that would take another sewer extension. The city has put aside \$1.2 million for that stretch, Raymond said.

He told the City Council this week he expects he'll need to hire two, possibly three new inspectors just to keep up with the work his office now faces. The new inspectors will help process permits and perform inspections, Raymond said.