Highway expansion could spur Nampa development

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NAMPA — An ongoing transportation project is likely to create a new entrance into Nampa by connecting U.S. Highway 16 to Interstate 84, and one property owner thinks the new gateway will be the site of a business boom in Canyon County.

“Looking forward to whenever the Highway 16 interchange gets completed, that will be a major north-south-east-west intersection in the state,” said Scott Nunes, owner of the 164-acre property near the site of the future interchange. “We see that kind of being the entrance into Canyon County and Nampa.”

Nunes’ land, which includes seven parcels bordered by Franklin Road to the north, Robinson Boulevard to the west and McDermott Road to the east, was annexed into the city of Nampa in early October and was zoned for commercial and possible light industrial use. While Nunes said he isn’t sure yet what might be built there, he’s optimistic that the future interchange will make the location appealing to new businesses.

“Right now we’re just laying the groundwork for developing it and as things progress we’ll get a better idea for exactly what type of uses we’ll see on it,” Nunes said.

According to Becky McKay, a developer with Engineering Solutions who represents Nunes, an application to annex the same property into the city was denied in 2009. The City Council determined annexation was “premature” then, she said.

Since then, the future path of Highway 16’s expansion has been determined, she said. Her company has also worked with the city on its comprehensive plan, and now, properties adjacent to Nunes’ have been annexed and zoned as gateway business districts. The time is especially right this time, she told the Nampa City Council, because business growth is picking up following the end of the recession.

“We’re now seeing a resurgence in development throughout the Valley,” McKay explained. “We’re
seeing that business development is moving forward and investment in the Nampa community is starting to take place. We believe that this particular development will promote commercial activity. We anticipate that this will be a new gateway. It will be a major activity center for the city of Nampa.”

One condition of the annexation is that the property cannot be used for residential development, a stipulation put forth by the Sorrento Lactalis plant, located across the Franklin Road intersection from Nunes’ property.

Nunes said he expects to start narrowing down the possibilities for the property’s use sometime next year, but that his time line is somewhat dependent on the Highway 16 expansion. That project is planned in three phases; phase one is complete, but the two remaining steps don’t have set completion dates yet.

“It’s something they’ve been working on for years, but it’ll completely be dependent on when they get the funding,” Nunes said. “We’re pretty excited about it, but it’s still a little ways out.”