

ORIGINAL IN RED



CITY OF STANLEY

City Council Workshop Minutes

January 12, 2026 @ 9:00 am

Stanley Community Center, 510 Eva Falls Ave, Stanley, ID 83278

Call to Order: (Mayor Botti) 9:05 am

Roll Call: Councilmember Cardoso – present, Councilmember Hernandez – Present, Councilmember Thompson – Present, Councilmember Cron – Present, Mayor Botti – Present

Also present from the City: City Clerk Hannah Fake, Treasurer Savannah Pedersen, Kimberly Peters.

Agenda Amendments:

Mayor/Council Comments:

Council Discussion:

- Workforce Housing

Mayor: This workshop is to regroup and discuss the Townhall meeting. We would like to explore new ideas that have come up since then. Mayor asked the Council to go through their main take aways from the Townhall.

Cardoso: He made a list of neutral, pros and cons.

- Neutral – People had lacked current info and so they came to get more information and they got it. Most people were happy the town is doing anything at all, and they wanted us to keep up the good work. The school was pleased we were taking into consideration staff and teachers. Affects to local utilities like sewer were brought up.
- Pro – Northwest can elevate the community to bring comfortable homes. The Mayor has worked tirelessly on this and he deserves a lot of praise. The failure to do something would jeopardize the future. This housing will create growth for local development and that people would live in the housing if it was priced at 30% income because people are housing insecure.
- Cons – Rents are too high, and people nearing retirement on fixed incomes couldn't afford it. It needs to be designed better, smaller units and rent more in line with local prices. This won't solve the problem of seasonal employees. He heard that businesses would only provide 200-300 in subsidies based on rents of the range of 700 to 900 per month.
- Tripp Costas has some ideas, and Gabe wants to hear those.
- Redfish was a proponent of rent subsidies
- Concerns that if the project went over budget the rents would be higher and so folks wanted to look for other design ideas and that garages were not a priority. There were concerns from the fire department. There was a lack of RV or seasonal employee solutions. If we don't build workforce housing it will revert and no longer be the City's property. There were concerns that Northwest would not be able to fill all the units.
- Cardoso is concerned that the most prominent business would take over the rentals and gain more benefit than smaller business.



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- Overall, most people thought the size was too big.

Thompson: Thought it was a great meeting, and it was the most people he has seen at a council meeting. He thinks we went into an auto dealership and was presented with one vehicle and that was it. We haven't seen any other models. He heard concern about the length of the lease and concerns about the cost of rent that people couldn't afford it or didn't want to pay it. He thinks we need to be flexible and attentive to the community.

- He would have a hard time voting on this without looking at a 5-million-dollar budget and smaller units. If we build larger units we probably only could build 2-4 units. If we build smaller, he thinks we could build 10+ units.
- Questioned if we have received the geotechnical yet? The Mayor said no.
- He thinks we should do the groundwork and then get bids to build a mix of 1, 2, and 3 bedroom units and then start building. He would like to look into a City-controlled project and smaller units.

Hernandez – Heard a combination of Cardoso and Thompsons points.

- There was concern for the 65 year lease, the rent was too high, and it was not a well-scale project. Everyone is still interested in housing, and we need to explore different avenues and compare apples to apples.
- Spoke with people in the Wood River Valley this weekend, one was a developer and the other person was a civil land use attorney. They questioned why the City was using a developer if the City has money, and land. The Civil land use attorney helped develop Tamarac and another place in McCall as well as Thompson Mine. Why hasn't the City pursued hiring a civil land use attorney to review it and the developer should pay for it and they can do all the review so that the community doesn't suffer if the developer pulls out or some unseen thing happens.
- Would like to just have phase 1 on the lease and we don't need to tie a phase 2 so that it is perpetually running.

Cron – Could only hear some of the conversation, mostly the councils input not the community, but he wants to make sure that is affordable for essential workers so they can move in. The City has already shopped around and looked at different companies that do this kind of work and we have chosen one. At some point we have to go into and make a choice and say that we are going to buy a car from this guy.

- Does not think that it is in the capability of our small City office to take this project on and not work with a developer. Cron does not see how this big a construction project would play out without a developer.
- The argument that the rents are too high – we have data on this that seems to support our essential workers can make this. It is natural for people to say that it is way too expensive especially where we are, but about 75% of people have their housing linked to their jobs. For most people their rent is already subsidized so spending x amount for rent is going to seem high because it is a big jump from their subsidized rent.



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- This is an opportunity to build not just rooms, or units, but to build homes. If someone moves here to work for the City, clinic, or teacher, they don't want a studio, people would take on a career job if they had a home with a bedroom, living room, garage, kitchen and is separate from their work.
- Likes the scope of 18 units, not sure if they will all be rented right off the bat but we are looking to build for the future as well 10-20 years down the line. Wants to attract families too.
- We have the money, if we don't use it, it will go away, same with the land. Northwest is a proven company and this is what they do, and they are willing to work with us to make some changes.
- Concerns about the 65 year lease are heard but this is standard and how it works. The developer is not going to go into a lease agreement that isn't long term. We put in our share, and then the developer is on the hook. The developer is looking for a commitment at this point. If we pull out we could lose them and also lose credibility with anyone else we might try to work with.
- Nothing will be perfect or please anyone, if we don't do anything there is no miracle that will solve the main problem.
We don't want places to live, we want *homes* for people to live here.
- It's easy to say it won't work with northwest, but it is not easy to come up with another plan and to say this is exactly how we should proceed otherwise.

Cardoso commented that he is pro working with Northwest. The 22-year payment plan with 0% interest is pretty good. Especially since we continue to gain interest on it.

Thompson provided clarification on his comment. He didn't want to put up studio apartments, his proposal he has come up with is for 6 one bedroom, 4 two bedroom and 2 three bedroom units that all that have 1 car garages. He has a plan and isn't promoting that the City does on our own, we have builders in the area, whether they want to take it on is another matter, and we could hire a firm to do the maintenance.

Mayor – Summary from the town hall was that there was a division of opinion and that is to be expected. He didn't see or hear any or absolute 100% agreement on any course of action. Also didn't hear any disagreement with the plan we have been working with for the last year; that phase one would be to serve essential workers and the other permanent workers, phase 2 would be temporary and seasonal workers.

- This project has been split into two phases to begin with because it is a very big project and that's where we brought the developer in. The Mayor talked to lots of developers, almost every affordable housing developer in Idaho, as well as builders. None of them wanted to take this project on because Stanley is a small market, constructing housing in a small community with few units is difficult. When they found out the majority of the workers in the community are seasonal they were not willing to work with us. We worked hard and found a developer to focus on phase one with the essential and permanent workers as the priority. The only way we have found to make this work is to have a public/private partnership where the City would put in a little over 1 million, not go into



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debt because this money is saved, and provide the land as well. We have not forgotten about phase 2, we are just focusing on phase 1 as the community directed.

- Did not hear the community express support in scaling down the project or that the City should try to finance and run the project itself with just the 4 million HUD grant. If we want more than that, the City would have to go into debt.
- Mayor heard that we need to rethink the size and amenities offered to reduce the rents as many thought the rents were too high at least compared to what workers pay now or might be willing to pay. However not everyone agreed on that. Some people thought that workers would pay the rents but still desired to see lower rents.
- This led to the discussion to see phase 1 offer a wider range of units, smaller townhomes for those workers who want to pay less rent or would be happier in smaller units. This is worth further discussion and looking at redesigning along these lines.
- The Mayor still heard support in retaining 2-3 bedroom townhomes to accommodate workers who have families or would like to have families, and that some people would be happier in smaller units but not everyone. Some people thought we should forgo the garages and storage to have lower rent.

Cron – Some people have requested guest rooms, not just more space for families, but as everyone knows, people want to come on vacation and visit you here.

Cardoso is concerned about a net gain of 0 housing with this project. He is terrified that if we establish \$1350 as a price for 1 bedroom apartment, what might that do to other rentals that exist and housing insecurity might increase. Currently housing insecurity is his biggest concern. If rents go way up it hurts anyone who is in rentals.

Mayor – Clarified that in phase 2 for seasonal housing, there would be lower rents as we don't expect seasonal employees to need as many amenities or have as large a space. Most of the basic infrastructure will need to be put in for phase 1. We don't want to compartmentalize the infrastructure because we would like to use it for phase 2. We can control what goes on through the lease. Whatever happens in phase 2, the City will still be in the driver seat.

Laurie – What she heard was that we could go another route, but we don't think anyone else at this time would be willing to work with us. Her understanding is the next step right now is to decide whether to work with the developer and if we do go with the developer, the City can still modify the design?

- Answer from Mayor: Yes

Laurie – Many essential workers don't want to live in studios or super small units. Do people need as big a space as in the current design? Probably not but the design can be modified. Having some garages would be good, we can meet somewhere in the middle. If the developer has designers, they should be have to have design modifications and get that done reasonably quickly. What is the timeline for this project? When do we need to go under contract to keep things on schedule?

Mayor: The Developer's plan is to start construction this spring with occupancy in the summer of 2027. To accomplish that there are a lot of steps. The most important thing right now is the



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option to lease because they need that to go out and secure loans and assure that the City will let them develop something. Once we sign the option to lease the City still gets to determine the terms of the lease. There would be give and take with the developer, and likely the banks as well. If that doesn't happen very soon it would be likely things would be pushed back and occupancy would not be in summer of 2027.

- The City has tried to front load the project by completing the environmental and cultural surveys etc. and get all of that done so that we can be ready to move and stay on schedule when we have a plan.

Cardoso – Does the lease agreement specify what kind of housing or in phase 2 could the developer just build something else like housing for Ketchum people. How do we ensure that doesn't happen?

Clerk – The only thing that can ever be built on the site is workforce housing. This is set by congress and in the entire future of the property, nothing else can be built but workforce housing for Stanley and its environs.

Austin Clegg – Thank you to the council, Mayor and staff. He is not envious of having to listen to 100s of opinions. When he was on the council 8 years ago, they were having the exact same conversation. He would like to express his gratitude for Mayor Botti and ask the council and community to trust him. He has been working on this for 2 decades and to say that we have not shopped around or looked at other options is a disservice to him. If you have been out of the picture and are just coming in, I would ask that you trust his guidance because he has been working on this for a long time.

- Clegg loves this project, its vision and forward thinking, it blesses Stanley for a long time. If anyone is thinking or expecting that the rent, in a small, beautiful, resort town be less than the rent in Boise, that doesn't make sense. If you think our economy can't sustain it, then maybe we need to make some changes. His brother is paying 1300 for a basement with 2 windows in Boise.
- There is no way this project will have a 0 net gain in housing. Right now, he has 2 -3 staff that they want to put into housing. They could then rent out the units these people were in and that would be more option tax, more local rentals, more business in town.

Cardoso questioned if units would be rented for a profit.

Clegg responded yes.

- This project creates housing for families that which missing in Stanley. Clegg has 4 kids in school and knows it is hard to have a family here. He has watched families come and go because of housing and as a faith leader he is worried about families here. He would like to have more options. H has lost at least 2 families with young kids because they didn't have stable housing. They said they would have worked forever in Stanley if they had somewhere stable to live. In the business world, those are the kind of people you want to hire.



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Cardoso – could you tell me about the subsidies? If only 2 business in town can provide subsidies of \$1000 aren't they going to beat everyone to housing. Would this be unfair to other businesses if they can't provide as much of a subsidy?

Clegg – responded that they already provide free housing so it wouldn't be much of a difference in value of what they provide.

- Clegg stated that he liked the 18 units and that he thought they would fill pretty easily. At some point the council has to make a decision. It has been talked about so long that even considering these other options is a step backwards as this has already been done 8 years ago when we looked into every possible scenario.

Cardoso questioned if an essential worker came to town and priority was provided to them for housing and another local worker had to move out. Would this be an issue for local businesses like Clegg's?

Clegg stated that he thought essential workers should be a priority and that working with a developer was the best way forward for the City.

Thompson is disappointed with the current plan and having townhomes. He asked how we feel about the design and does it have to be a townhome?

Clegg responded that sometimes done is better than perfect. He likes the developer because they are an expert in the field and it seems like Northwest is flexible in listening and considering different designs.

Kurt K – The 65 year lease seems pretty unacceptable for most of the community. It seems the City is more interested in maximizing the scale and has no interest in managing it. There is a lot of concern with the City relinquishing the right to the property and not managing the property. It is an interesting concept to build for people who aren't here yet as the population is 100 we might not fill all the units. We could build at a scale that the City can manage and fund on their own.

The Clerk provided some clarity that the City is not looking to not be involve in this project. The City does not want to manage all the little aspects of the project and the management. The City does not have the capacity to do this. The City will retain oversight and management at a higher level through the management agreements and the lease.

- The community in the beginning came forward and said these are the things we would like, space, not having roommates above us, garages, etc. Now the community has seen the price tag on this and has changed their priorities. That is okay, and we can work with that. The Clerk has been in touch with the developer after the town hall and the Northwest is amenable to making changes and they want to make this work for the community. They have to make sure this is feasible because the finances are on them.

Cron – Subsidies come in different forms. If you have a seasonal employee who wants to live here in the winter, you can negotiate their summer wage with them to help them afford housing



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in the winter. This will provide them with housing security, so they don't have to live in a 1 room shed.

- Mayor stepped out at 10:13 am.

Hernandez: What is the timeline and is Northwest interested in doing a redesign of the units.

Clerk – Yes, Northwest is interested and will ask for a timeline on the new design.

Tripp Costas – He will always make himself available to share his experience from his previous career. He is a proponent of having smaller spaces and can you still offer nice units with smaller spaces. He is not an architect but has worked with them and he can look at his existing client database. If we zoom out and look at his takeaways from the meeting his concern is if that the developer can develop while maintaining the rent price. His napkin math shows that cost to build per square foot is under \$300 which seems very low. He would be excited if that could happen but his cost per square foot has been much more that has been quoted for his projects locally.

- There are concerns about the overall cost of the building and that the City will have no control over the rent if the project goes way over budget. The developer said that this was a new style of project and they haven't done one with this kind of funding mechanism. If he can build to budget that would be admirable. He would like to see some assurance of rent cost at a baseline.

Mayor returned at 10:21 am.

Cardoso: What is the quickest way to review plan b, what would be the first step if we wanted to go with what Charlie is suggesting?

Thompson: The first step would be to do the dirt work and Thompson would like to hear from Russell Clark.

Russel Clark: He is a big proponent of workforce housing, and trying to accommodate the essential workers from the get-go. His concern, not as business owner, but as a Stanley Resident, wants this to be a multi generational City and to do that we must have the essential employees, teachers, sewer, clerks, clinic workers, Mayor etc. We need things to make the town go round. What he is hearing is that the proposed rents are too big for what workers can handle. He doesn't think they are disproportional to the size of the units but doesn't think some workers can afford that. He thinks the City should start with something smaller that can go up quickly, studio, 1 and 2 bedroom units of 500, 700 sq feet with \$700-900 per month for rent. Once this is full you can start on phase 2 and build bigger units with garages decks, and more square footage.

- He knows this is flipping the script the garage is great in concept but how many people in this town have a car in their garage, it is mostly filled with junk, toys, atvs, snowmobiles, it increases the cost of insurance. Everyone puts bbqs on decks and that increases insurance and fire risk. Decks become storage spaces as well. When someone moves out and they leave all their stuff behind it becomes a problem.
- Mountain village will see a benefit no matter what is built but his passion is for this community. The Council has worked hard on this and he appreciates it. He is



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uncomfortable with the City getting into a 65 year lease. What he wants to offer is to be of assistance and he won't do that for free because he would have to hire people to get it done.

- He doesn't think the building time frame is accurate and doesn't see any way you can start in the spring. The Geotech was just done and you are building on sewer ponds. The Geotech will bring change order 1 and as soon as you start digging that will bring change order 2. He thinks it will be lucky if there is a foundation by fall and occupancy by spring of 28. His current building project has been moving along.
- Unfortunately no one came to the table until information on the rents came out. Clark questioned if EMTs or teachers could make the rents.

Steve Herret shook his head that he didn't think EMTs could afford the rents.

Amanda Brady said she thought teachers would pay the rents and make it work but they of course would like to pay less.

Thompson asked Clark if he thought both scenarios could work.

Clark stated that he thought the developer would have to be involved from start to finish and it would be foolish for the developer to do phase one and someone else do phase 2. If Clark was the developer, he would not just do phase 1.

Cardoso questioned if we are not valuing the land in this scenario.

Mayor said the land had been appraised at \$300,000 which he thought was low value. If we go alone phase 2 will be a lot harder.

Clark – You could build 3-4 kitchens for the cost of 1 garage. Building storage units is cheap, about \$60 per square foot down south.

Treasurer has looked through the numbers and the dirt work came in as one of the most expensive things. Asked Clark if dirt work is a separate quote from the cost per square foot of the house.

Clark replied that it is a separate cost from the water, parking, sewer, retaining walls.

Cron – The current design is 3 story with 1st story a 2 car garage, 2nd story is living space, the 3rd story is sleeping quarters.

Treasurer said she didn't hear anyone against the developer, just people are looking for a smaller size with more options, with or without a garage and lowering the cost is a big part.

Thompson has come up with his own plan that has smaller square footage and he thinks to keep this rolling John has to show up here and the council has to walk the property with him.

Thompson has a plan with a road in front and behind all the buildings for quality of living. In three weeks he could hire someone to present a plan for \$3,000 to \$5,000. But he isn't opposed to Northwest.



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Cardoso – Does anyone disagree with Russell for not having occupancy till 2028? Even if no one disagrees we have to keep working towards housing. We have people who he doesn't want to lose who need housing.

Thompson stated we need to have a plan and would like him to come up and talk to us.

Cron – Unless we commit to Northwest they aren't going to want to come up.

Thompson – Why are the houses built in the hill and in the wetland? That won't work and we can't do that.

Mayor – Phase 1 doesn't have buildings in the wetlands; we are trying to avoid impacting them.

Clark – Wants to offer that he has land in town and is willing to let people use the land for mobile units on a temporary basis to house a few people you don't want to lose even if you say yes to Northwest tomorrow.

Mayor – We have to be careful that the pendulum doesn't swing the other way – and we build too small housing and without many amenities that long term residents want. We will work to refine the target a bit and reach out to more workers to see exactly what they want.

Lisa Muscavage stated that she didn't think we needed to go back to the community. It is clear what the community wants, more diversity of sizes and slightly smaller units square footage wise and lower rent.

Question if the units would have to be ADA compliant because that would impact size. – The Clerk will check up on this.

Muscavage stated that the council could pay him to come up if they didn't think he would come without some compensation.

The Treasurer said the City didn't have a lot of excess funds and she thought he would come.

Muscavage asked if there was a timeline on how long in the 65 years that the rent would be split.

Clerk stated that the profit for the entire length of the lease would be split 50/50 and it was only projected to be about \$40,000 annually so that would be \$20,000 in profit annually.

Cron – remember this is not a for profit company.

Mayor – John from Northwest said from the beginning that the designs we are looking at are preliminary designs and expects modifications to it before we break ground.

Mayor – we need to give John some criteria of how we want the designs done.

Clark – Families are important and we could have some 2 and 3 bedroom units but right now we have a lot of individual people demanding space and we won't know what the demand is until after 3 years. Russel is willing to help but won't do it for free.

Cron – Doesn't know how much further we can go further until we commit to working with Northwest.



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Mayor – Doesn't think that Northwest will work much longer without a commitment but we still have a little bit of time to sort a few more things out before the Option to Lease is signed but we need the Option to lease to get the ball rolling and we can't refine anything until we provide a commitment.

Cron – If decreases in square footage will reduce rent (answer from Clerk was yes) will that still be enough space to consider it a home. We can have a garage, but we could reduce the size.

Cardoso – would like to see a master plan as what we are doing in phase two has not been addressed. He would like to see a master plan.

Mayor – We have a plan, it is a conceptual drawing that shows more housing to the west, and we had to produce that for HUD. We have time later to figure out exactly what phase 2 will be.

The Clerk added that phase 2 has always been discussed as seasonal housing.

Cardoso brought up his concern of zero net housing again.

Austin Clegg restated that he thought the City could rework some of the square footage but hopes the City begins to work with Northwest.

The Mayor stated that we want a phase 2 and the developer will work on that when we are done with phase 1 and it probably wouldn't look like more townhomes.

Thompson – Is HUD going to hold the City or Northwest to the site plan forever?

Mayor – No, this a conceptual site plan. They understand things can change in the future.

Thompson – What if northwest wanted to switch from units to do an RV park.

Mayor – is not sure about how much change would be allowed and would need to have a discussion with HUD down the road.

Thompson – Would like to have a meeting with John of Northwest next week to discuss how units could be scaled down.

Cron asked each council member if they were in agreement to move forward with more diversity of units. Hernandez said if the units were smaller in square footage then would be okay with more units. Cardoso said he would be okay with more units and Cron was also okay with more units. Hernandez is against having garages, Cron and Cardoso stated they were okay with garages and maybe to have some smaller garages like 1 car to meet in the middle. The size of the garage was an issue for Thompson. Thompson is concerned with the steep slope and thinks there are better sites for the housing. Hernandez thought building storage units elsewhere where people could opt to have one could be an option.

Hernandez would like to look at apartment style as townhouses are more expensive to build and could look at a 4 plex apartment of something similar.



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The Clerk restated that the summary to give to John would be that they are looking for less square footage per unit, the option to double the number of one bedroom units and have more variety of units and rents, some with garages, some without and some 1 car garages instead of 2.

Mayor would like to give more details like square footage. 650 for 1 bedroom and 800 for 2 bedroom.

Michael Powell- In County commissioner meetings 4-5 summers ago the road from 75 into the site was brought up as it is not up to standard and that a lot of infill would be needed to make the road compliant.

Mayor -The road does need a lot of work. The County agreed a few years ago to reconstruct that road where it is now to bring it up to standard because it has no base. They put that on hold because we wanted to consider moving road to the south, as that is provided for in legislation transferring the land to City. The county will move road to south if the City asks. Moving the road to the south would open up more development area and we have had discussions with the commissioners more recently on it. We do not know what the costs would be, but we don't think all the cost would be born by them. If we do move it there are wetland considerations.

The treasurer stated that the Commissioners are supportive of the road, and are willing to work with us and the City should not have to have all the costs.

Mayor – With consideration of the site plan for phase 1. The units were moved as far to the east as possible as that is the sunniest and warmest side of lot and that would be the nicest spot for the permanent year round employees.

Thompson – John needs to come, this meeting was helpful but wants to walk the site with John prior to getting a new design.

Cron – We need to give John criteria beforehand so we can have a useful conversation when he comes in person. We don't need another town hall.

Mayor – This wasn't a town hall but we did let people talk. The next meeting we do not need to field as many questions.

Kimberly Peters – Essential workers would prefer to not have a 9am meeting as many are working. Evening is better.

The council discussed with the clerk when they were available to meet next with John.

Thompson thinks that there should be a road with a second story walk out on the town homes and have a road behind it and he said Russell told him he thought you could build that for \$100,000. And the buildings should be moved away from the hillside.

Adjourn – 11:53 am

Steve Botti – Mayor

Attest: Hannah Fake – City Clerk

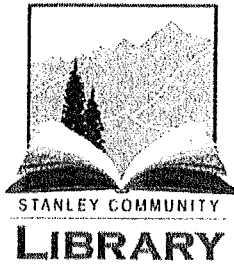
1.21.26 Council Meeting Site Visit and Workshop

Included Letters

Regarding Workforce Housing

1.16.26 – Stanley Community Library Board

1.21.26 – Roni Gilbertson



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January 16, 2026

City Of Stanley
PO Box 53 / 510 Eva Falls Ave.
Stanley, ID 83278
cityclerk@cityofstanleyid.gov

Dear City of Stanley,

We are writing to express support for the workforce housing project in Stanley, as summarized by Mayor Botti's public letter dated 12/29/2025. The library appreciates being categorized among the list of essential workers in the community and will be grateful for the opportunity to potentially house staff at the development. We support the plan that prioritizes essential workers, then making remaining units available for other local workers. It is important that Stanley has habitation opportunities for workers to become full-time community members, grow families, invest in businesses, and be part of a functional town.

We would like to see the City Council move forward with signing a lease with Northwest Real—Estate Capital Corp and combining the HUD grant and option tax savings with capital raised by the developer to finance the project. We have confidence that partnering with this non-profit organization experienced in housing projects, property management, and development will benefit the city and its community in the long run. In the course of designing plans for the project, we echo public sentiment that varied units by size and type are encouraged.

We feel that as employers, it is important for us to examine and adjust our budgets so that our staff has a living wage compatible with the local cost of living, making it possible to afford rent.

We commend Mayor Botti and the city for the immense effort in getting to this point in the project. Please feel free to contact the Stanley Community Library if additional clarification or comment is needed.

In sincere hopes of this project progressing so that we can potentially see rentable units as soon as 2027,

Liesl Scherthanner
Director, on Behalf of the Library Board of Trustees:

Celina Moreno, Trustee
Sylvia Hamilton, Trustee
Alissa Arndt, Trustee
Nancy Weeks, Trustee
Lisa Muscavage, Trustee

Receive by email:

Dear Mayor and Members of the City Council,

My name is Roni Gilbertson, and I am writing to you not as an expert or a developer, but as an essential worker who has experienced firsthand the very real housing crisis in Stanley. I respectfully urge you to approve the current workforce housing project on Museum Drive as presented, without changes, so that this critically needed development can move forward without delay.

This fall, I accepted a contract to teach at Stanley School without having secured housing. I did so because I believed in the community, the students, and the importance of serving Stanley. What followed, however, was an incredibly uncertain and humbling experience. I was fortunate to be supported by generous community members. Amanda Brady and Sammy Forsgren spent many hours searching for housing. Austin and Amy Clegg, offered me a travel trailer to rent for six weeks so I would have somewhere safe to live until I could move into my current rental. My current housing is only available from October 1 through April 30.

As of today, I still do not have secured housing from May 1 through May 28, the end of the school year. That uncertainty weighs heavily on me, and it directly impacts my ability to commit to returning next year. I know I am not alone in this situation. The housing crisis in Stanley affects teachers, first responders, healthcare workers, and many other essential employees who want to live and invest in this community but simply cannot find stable, year-round housing.

This is why the workforce housing project on Museum Drive matters so deeply. You will not attract or retain professionals, year-round employees, or families in Stanley without quality housing that is built for our climate and our reality. In a place where winter temperatures drop well below zero, features like garages are not a luxury; they are a necessity for safety, reliability, and long-term livability.

Northwest is a strong and realistic partner for this project. The proposed plan to build 18 townhomes, supported by a \$4 million HUD grant, City savings, and financing secured by Northwest, represents a rare and valuable opportunity. The structure of the 65-year land lease, the City's oversight of how the housing is built, managed, and rented, and the priority for permanent essential workers are all consistent with successful workforce housing models across the country.

My concern is simple and urgent. If this project does not move forward this spring, the risk of increased construction costs, inflation, or the developer backing out is very real. It is already difficult to find a developer willing to take on a project of 18 to 20 units in Stanley, Idaho. Delays or changes could jeopardize the partnership with Northwest and threaten the timeline needed to break ground in Spring 2026.

This project is about more than buildings. It is about whether Stanley can grow sustainably, support its workforce, and remain a viable year-round community. I respectfully ask you to approve the current plan as proposed so that essential workers like myself can continue to serve, live, and build a future here.

Thank you for your time, your leadership, and your commitment to the future of Stanley.

Sincerely,

Roni Gilbertson

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Ronice Gilbertson

208.866.7234

Show your support for firefighters:

