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FEB 03 2020

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McMinnville City Council

Councilors,

Chapters 1 & 2 of the TSP Plan (the "Executive Summary" and "Guiding Goal and Policies", make it clear that this was a ten year effort to set up a workable process to identify areas of future growth in town – and improve the transportation infrastructure in those areas BEFORE (or at least at the same time) that density additions and traffic growth occurred. Several statements in those two TSP chapters make it clear that the purpose for improving transportation services ahead of growth were to:

- "Accommodate growth differently – let's not become another _____ (insert name of offending city here)."
- "seek transportation efficiency, but not as a sacrifice to our small town atmosphere or its desire to keep McMinnville Livable." (page 2-1 of Guiding goal and policies).
- "comprehensive transportation plan that keeps traffic moving"

Then Chapter E – the Comprehensive Plan Policies chapter – listed specific policies that would be followed that would help attain the above goals. A few of those policies are:

1. GROWTH MANAGEMENT (page E-7) – "The construction of transportation facilities in the McMinnville planning area shall be timed to coincide with community needs, and shall be implemented so as to minimize impacts on existing development."
2. SUPPORTIVE OF GENERAL LAND USE PLAN DESIGNATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS (page E-7) – "the implementation of implementation of transportation facilities and services shall be based on serving current and future travel demand – both short-term and long-termed planned uses."

A quote on page 2 of the Executive Summary even specifically identified the area between 2nd street and Baker Creek road as the worst area in town to locate high density/high traffic generating developments – "From a city-wide perspective there are too few east-west arterial connections spanning McMinnville. An example, Baker Creek Road and the combination of west 2nd street and Wallace Road (major east-west routes) help frame the northwest corner of McMinnville. In between are Michelbook golf course and the city park. Realistically, there are no options to align new arterial through streets in this area through existing streets or Michelbook golf course." -- I believe this lack of East-West roads was one major reason the Westside Density Plan recommends a maximum density of 6 dwelling units per acre on much of the westside area.

That gets me to the Baker Creek Road situation today. The city rates it as a "minor arterial" with a maximum capacity of 20,000 vehicles per day. Up to the early 2000's, there had been limited number of homes west of Doral street, so capacity was never a problem. But that has changed dramatically in the last five or six years as the city has approved several large developments west of the golf course – from Redmond Hill road clear to Baker Creek road – WHILE AT THE SAME TIME SPENDING 10 MILLION OR SO DOLLARS MAKING HILL ROAD A MAJOR NORTH/SOUTH "RING ROAD" SO A LARGE NUMBER OF WESTSIDE DRIVERS COULD AVOID CLOGGING UP THE CENTER OF TOWN BY USING HILL AND BAKER CREEK ROADS AS "RING ROADS" TO ACCESS THE HIGH SCHOOL AND NORTH HWY 99 AREAS. The results have been predictable – the daily traffic rate on Baker Creek road has probably doubled in the last five years. The 2-day traffic study on Jan 22nd and 23rd showed that Baker Creek road traffic now averages

about 8,000 trips per day mid-week during the school year. School buses help cause a fair amount of congestion during morning and afternoon rush hours. And with no pullouts available, I am sure that Yamco buses will have An even larger effect in the near future.

That gets me back to the intent of TSP goals. IF you take the current traffic volume on Baker Creek road today, and add the volume that is already scheduled to hit Baker Creek road in the next 5-10 years – the city council should be planning to upgrade Baker Creek road to the 32,000 tpd classification of a major arterial road by 2025 or so – IF THE BAKER CREEK NORTH PROPERTY REMAINS VACANT. – I freely admit to using fairly aggressive future increase here. BUT if you keep in mind three factors that I think the city is underestimating, I think my projections are more accurate than the independent studies that developers have been giving you: 1). 100% of traffic generated from Baker Creek north and Oak Ridge Meadows will have to at least start/finish their trips on Baker Creek road (it's the only access road available to residents living on the North side of BCR). 2) that the improvements to Hill Road have added a lot more “ring road” traffic to Baker creek road than projected (the north end of town is the final destination for a high per cent of commuters). And finally, 3) my twice a day “dog walk traffic study” has concluded that probably 75% of traffic generated west of the golf course, and north of Cottonwood – uses Baker Creek road for their back/forth commutes rather than Wallace or 2nd.

Using those assumptions – and TSP goals Baker Creek road will be over capacity as soon as 2023 if you approve Baker Creek North at anywhere near the density that Stafford Development and your Planning staff are pushing for.

- 8,000 - Current volume
- 1,000 - Added volume from Oak Ridge Meadows – BCR is the only access road to ORM's too.
- 3,500(?) – additional volume from houses and apartments yet to sell and fill in Baker Creek E/W.
- 2,500(?) – added ring road volume from new dwelling units as far south as Alexandria.
- 4,000 – if Baker Creek north is approved at Stafford's current density request.
- ???? -- additional future volume when the from the proposed school property, Scott Brosius's property, and the other still vacant property west of Hill Road towards Fox Ridge road.

With the added complexity added by Comprehensive Plan policy #120 – that states, “The City of McMinnville may require limited and/or shared access points along major and minor arterials, in order to facilitate safe access flows.” – Well --- your plan for Baker Creek road – calls for “0” controlled intersections in the one mile stretch between Hill and Michelbook where there will be 12 uncontrolled intersections on both sides of Baker Creek road when Baker Creek north is complete (3 access streets in Baker Creek North). – So, the reality is that approving one more high density development to the north side of Baker Creek Road before its capacity is increased to 32,000 tpd - will truly result in the safety and transportation train wreck that your danged TSP plan (and supposed rule book) is intended to prevent.

The Comprehensive Plan Policies that support not approving a third high density (and traffic generating) development in the Baker Creek corridor are:

1. Policy 117.00 – “The City of McMinnville shall endeavor to insure that the roadway network provides safe and easy access to every parcel.” – 20,000 vehicle trips per day certainly won't provide that at the 12 uncontrolled intersections.
2. Policy 118.00 (3) “Emphasis placed on the future needs of the area to be serviced.”

3. Policy 132.15 – on pedestrian/bike safety – “the City of McMinnville shall require that all new residential developments provide pedestrian connections with adjacent neighborhoods and neighborhood activity centers.” – One major area where your Westside development plans are world class – are the parks and walking trails. – BUT you already have probably 200 walkers, runners, bikers per day using the Baker Creek corridor, and Roma Sitton walkway. – With the east/west volume on Baker Creek Road increasing so drastically in the next few years – won’t both the intersections at Meadows and Shadden require major crosswalk upgrades to allow the bike and pedestrian traffic to safely cross Baker Creek road??? (the TSP emphasized bike and pedestrian safety more than vehicle safety). 132.20 also covers this.
4. Encourage Safety enhancements – page E-9 – “The City should encourage traffic and pedestrian safety improvements that may include traffic circles” – to improve safety and livability enhancements.
5. Policy 132.23.00 – “The McMinnville Transportation System Plan shall be updated as necessary to remain consistent with the city’s land use plan.” -- Your current upgrade plan includes Riverside drive, 3rd street, and several other area improvements out to 2023. But Baker Creek road wasn’t projected to have the density/traffic it has gained in the last five years. So doesn’t it need to move to the front of the list?
6. Policy 132.29.00 -- “The construction of transportation facilities in the McMinnville Planning area shall be timed to coincide with the community needs, and shall be implemented so as to minimize impacts on existing development. Prioritization of improvements should consider the City’s level of service standards.”

My question is --- In the 2.5 years that McMinnville’s planning staff works with developers staffs – BEFORE A FORMAL APPLICATION REACHES THE CITY PLANNING COMMISSIONERS AND CITY COUNCILORS, Isn’t one of the Planning Staffs main responsibilities be to force developers to meet ALL of the goals and policies in McMinnville’s Comp and TSP plans??? What I have witnessed in the Oak Ridge Meadows and now Baker Creek North hearings is that the Staff Recommendation Report does a great job of emphasizing all of the “hot button” policies the applicants proposal does meet, like bike paths/walking trails, complete streets, HOA maintained parks, etc. BUT the staff reports avoid making councilors aware of all the unfair damages to the quality of life, the environment, or traffic congestion both in and surrounding these developments. – AND heaven forbid if a neighborhood group pays for professional studies and offers several hundred pages of Comprehensive Plan based testimony that point out those omissions (like the mayor asks for at the beginning of hearings). They are then accused of being rich, selfish NIMBY’s who are opposed to change. That is just not true. We only want to planning department and city council to fairly enforce ALL the TSP policies. Not just the ones that meet the needs of a few special interest groups that do not represent the majority of citizens.

In conclusion, I totally support ALL the well thought out changes recommended by the TSP committee. But the councils last several decisions have totally trashed the goals in that plan intended to protect: 1) citizen livability, 2) the environment and small town feel of McMinnville, and; 3) The danged Transportation System the committee spent ten years trying to setup up a PROCESS FOR GROWTH THAT WOULD WORK.

Respectfully,

Mike Colvins