

Theresa Cherniak
Department of Land Use and Transportation
155 N First Avenue
Hillsboro, OR 97124

February 19, 2019

RE: Draft 2019-20 Long Range Planning Work Program

Dear Theresa,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft 2019-2020 Long Range Planning Work Program. CCI has reviewed and discussed the draft Work Program and would like to submit the following comments.

Significant Natural Resource and Tree Code Issue Paper

We appreciate the efforts Washington County is placing on reviewing and evaluating Tree Code and Significant Natural Resources (SNR) and the inclusion in the 2019-20 Work Program. We look forward to the release of the issue paper and would like to encourage multiple opportunities for community members to learn about SNR and Tree Code, including how SNR and tree protection are addressed in other jurisdictions. Community members need to understand solutions proposed by staff for preservation of resources and be provided with adequate opportunities to suggest alternatives.

We are hopeful that the initial release of this issue paper will be considered a “draft.” Physical and virtual open houses and public hearings should be held prior to finalizing recommendations for SNR and Tree Code. We suggest that all comments received should be shared online and sent directly to CCI and only after adequate public outreach should decisions be made on the best ways to protect SNR and trees.

Walkway Gaps

We understand the barriers the Nollan/Dolan decisions place on jurisdictions in acquiring right-of-way (ROW) for sidewalks. Yet, we question why all new homes being constructed, including replacement dwellings, are not required to meet all code standards. Currently, fire standards, building codes and setbacks must be met when new homes are built or homes are rebuilt. We question why the same adherence to current standards does not apply to road standards and specifically sidewalks.

We request code changes, as a Tier 1 priority, to require dedication of ROW meeting current standards for all new home construction or replacement dwellings on lots created prior to adoption of county code for construction of sidewalks.

Infill Policy

Mitigating the impacts of infill development on existing homeowners is of primary importance to established neighborhoods. While we are disappointed infill policy was not included as a top tier in the current work plan, we understand county staff has limitations created by other ongoing work. We look forward to improved infill policy in the near future.

Wireless Telecommunication Facilities (WTF)

CCI requests adequate opportunities, including Public Hearings, to allow public comments on the staff recommended solutions on WTF.

Posting of Development Sites

Thank you for beginning to address our concerns by requiring signage with contact information for development sites, beginning with grading work. We will monitor developer compliance with this requirement and will provide feedback to LUT staff, if this signage is ineffective in addressing our concerns.

Short-Term Rentals

Short-term rentals can have negative impacts on neighborhood livability and availability of needed housing for area residents. CCI is pleased to see that a short-term rental issue paper is planned to be included in the upcoming work program. We would like to be included as a stakeholder providing input into this issue paper. Because of the impacts of short-term rentals on neighborhood livability, we believe ample public outreach, with adequate time for public response, should be provided with the issuance of a draft issue paper.

Public Access to Online Information

CCI would like to offer assistance, as needed, with county website improvements. Our hope is that the website would offer improved public access so the public can more easily find information. Please feel free to contact us, if we can provide support thru a sub-committee or input at a CCI meeting.

Governance Issue Paper: Future of Urban Unincorporated Areas

We continue to be concerned that important long-term projects are deferred for lack of funding. Governance issues, economic development, comprehensive plan review, and community development code revamp that includes clear and objective standards are all projects that need attention. Grants should not be solely relied upon to accomplish these tasks. We will encourage the BCC to allocate additional resources to long range planning to ensure the livability of Washington County.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

Kathy Stallkamp
CCI Chair

Vote: February 19, 2019 Ayes: Nays: Abstains