

Doug McIntyre

From: Deborah Sogge <deb@sammamishchamber.org>
Sent: Tuesday, July 28, 2020 9:57 AM
To: EIS
Cc: Sammamish Chamber; City Council; David Pyle; Doug McIntyre
Subject: EIS Scoping Comments
Attachments: Sammamish Chamber of Commerce Scoping Comments.docx

[CAUTION - EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Please find attached, our EIS Scoping comments.

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July 28, 2020

Attention: EIS Scoping Comment

Re: Sammamish Chamber of Commerce EIS Scoping Comments

- The proposal does not identify what the City Council's objective is in pursuing new transportation level of service standards. Traffic in the City is manageable on most corridors. Pre-pandemic, the City's Comprehensive Plan shows that with few exceptions, total average delay at Sammamish intersections is less than 30 seconds during the weekday morning and afternoon peak periods. Having more services in the City will reduce overall travel. In addition, we now have seen major traffic reductions due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and we may see long-term traffic pattern changes and peak hour traffic reductions as businesses and workers accustom themselves to remote-work options. To evaluate the purpose and impacts of new LOS standards, the City should frame the EIS in terms of the objective it is trying to achieve.
- The Chamber supports the Town Center as an important location for business services and opportunities in Sammamish. The success of our businesses, existing and future, depend upon the City meeting its growth targets for jobs and housing. We are concerned that a new transportation level of service standard may interfere with development of the Town Center and block the City from achieving residential densities important to the support of local businesses. The EIS should evaluate a variety of LOS standards, including the 2018 Intersection LOS standards, for how they support the Town Center.
- The City should study the cost implications of a new LOS standard that forces expensive new road improvements. Local businesses thrive when they can hire local employees, but if the City adopts road-centric LOS standards we are concerned they will undermine the development of affordable housing for local workers. Even if "growth pays for growth," those facilities generate repair and maintenance obligations, which create long-term fiscal responsibilities for the community. The EIS should analyze the financial and environmental impacts of setting the LOS standards too high, which impacts our businesses, too.

- The EIS should identify impacts in terms of travel time delay for different LOS standards. Does a higher LOS standard make it 30 seconds faster to get through town? 90 seconds? Two minutes? If higher LOS standards mean building new road infrastructure, the EIS should evaluate the financial and environmental costs associated with those road improvements. The EIS should study the trade-offs of getting through town a bit faster, in terms of achieving GMA goals for meeting housing targets, fostering economic development, and reducing sprawl.
- The EIS should analyze the delay in housing and economic development caused by forecast concurrency failures under various LOS standards.
- Comprehensive Plan policies for meeting Sammamish growth targets and other GMA goals used TDRs to boost density in Town Center zones. TDRs and associated development conserve important nearby forest and agricultural lands and prevent low density sprawl. Those policies formed the basis for state grants that improved SE 4th Street, and an Interlocal Agreement with King County for TDR purchases that included County funding for City park and recreational lands. The EIS should evaluate environmental and financial impacts for any LOS standards that would interfere with the purposes and fulfillment of TDR-based grants and agreements, including the potential requirement for the City to refund a portion of County funding if the LOS standards frustrate the ability to use TDRs in the City.
- Committing to the significant expense of updating the EIS at this time, with our city financials struggling, especially during this time of the COVID-19 Pandemic, is ignoring the city's responsibility to our citizens of being fiscally prudent.

Respectfully,

The Sammamish Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors