



Captain John Mullan Neighborhood Council

435 Ryman Street
Missoula, MT 59802
August 19, 2019

Mayor John Engen
435 Ryman Street
Missoula, MT 59802

Ward 2 Alderman Jordan Hess
834 Sherwood Street
Missoula, MT 59802

Ward 2 Alderwoman Mirtha Becerra
435 Ryman Street
Missoula, MT 59802

Dear Mayor Engen / Alderwoman Becerra / Alderman Hess:

The members of the John Mullan Neighborhood Council are concerned about transportation interconnectivity and park development lagging behind housing development, and are hoping you can prevail on the full City Council to address current problems and change policies to avoid these problems throughout the city in the future. If these problems are not addressed City-wide, Missoula will soon lack the qualities that make it so special. We understand the City is focusing on providing lower cost housing, but housing alone without the outdoor opportunities and transportation interconnectivity enjoyed in more established neighborhoods means a poor quality of life.

- **Please connect Clark Fork Lane to Union Pacific Street as soon as possible.** The planned O'Shaughnessy Street and Dublin Street connections were not made to Mullan Road when the Mullan Reserve and 4100 Condominiums were developed, nor were street connections made when the Brooklyn West and Tollefson apartments were developed (see attachment 1). Due to heavy traffic on Mullan Road, it is not possible to make left turns from any of the apartment or condo access drives onto Mullan road. The occupants of those 832 dwellings can only access downtown Missoula by using the intersection of Reserve and Union Pacific streets, along with the residents of Hellgate Meadows, the Shamrock Apartments, and the Tyson Vance Apartments. The congestion at that intersection is incredible, especially during morning and afternoon rush hours. People often have to idle through two traffic light rotations before finally crossing the intersection on the third light.
 - Some of this work is planned to be accomplished with the Missoula BUILD grant, if it is funded.

- Regardless of whether the Missoula BUILD grant is funded, please see that regulations are changed so that the infrastructure is in place to handle traffic *before* development occurs or concurrent with development so that residents don't have to wait 10 years for the infrastructure they need.
 - Please complete an updated coherent plan for development and infrastructure for the area west of Reserve, between the Clark Fork River and I-80, and then work to get the infrastructure in place before the development occurs. That area is going to be developed, and without a solid plan, it could end up being a real mess.
 - Please complete the preliminary designs for and continue to pursue funding to complete connector roads such as Mary Jane and George Elmer. If there is a comprehensive plan and designs are "on the shelf", agencies such as Montana Department of Transportation are more likely to look favorably on future grant applications.

- **Please reduce the traffic speed on Mullan Road from the Clark Fork Lane intersection to Flynn Lane.** There have been numerous accidents along this stretch of road, and it's not just motorists trying to enter Mullan from the apartment and condo developments. Motorists attempting to turn right into the condominium and apartment complexes have been rear-ended because those following them are going too fast to react to a blinker in time.
 - We realize speed is determined by the State of Montana, so please work with the State to establish procedures for adjusting speed limits when extensive new development occurs. It is not reasonable or ethical to wait for a fatality to adjust speed limits in developing areas.

- **Please work with developers who have upcoming projects in the area to include park space to serve the 947 recently constructed units and the upcoming developments.** There are many children and dogs in these apartments and condos – *two* grade school/middle school busses and a high school bus are filled each school day morning and afternoon – but there is no park or substantial green space within walking distance of these homes (see attachments 1 and 2). Consequently, the common areas in Hellgate Meadows are overused by those in the apartments and condos. None of these common spaces are big enough to meet the City's standards for a park, and their upkeep is paid for by the homeowners of Hellgate Meadows, who are essentially paying for parks not provided during apartment and condo development. Mr. Payne has plans to develop the property adjacent to Clark Fork Lane between Union Pacific and Mullan, probably mostly for commercial uses. Mr. Hoyt and Mr. Edgell have plans to develop the area bounded by Mullan Road, Flynn Lane, Pleasant View, Hellgate Meadows, and the 4100 Condos, mainly for single family homes. Neither development has been finalized yet, so there are opportunities to provide a park in either location. In fact, a large common area is already identified in the current zoning for the Hoyt and Edgell development area.
 - Please adjust City practices to assure that City parks are provided within walking distance for residents of all new developments, not just single-family home developments.

- **Please work to complete trail and sidewalk connections from new developments to schools and parks.** Currently, there are sidewalks in all the new developments in the area, but they don't all connect to the school so that kids who are nearby can walk or ride their bikes to school. For instance, the bike path along Mullan Road extends west from Flynn Road to Cote Lane, but there's no path along the 1,200 feet east of Flynn that would connect to the existing sidewalk from the 4100 Condos to Reserve Street. This connection should be made soon, even though the property isn't yet developed. Another example is that the 44 Ranch development is only 1,000 feet from the school, but there is no path through or around the fenced fields between the development and the school. Without a connecting path, children must travel a mile and a half more to get to the school. We suggest you work with property owners to obtain a path right of way extending from 44 Ranch to the school via either Pius Way or Tipperary Way/Siren's Road. Making these connections would make it possible for a lot more kids to walk or ride their bikes to school.
 - Please change regulations so that trails and sidewalks are in place to connect residences to schools and parks when development occurs and that development is not finalized until the infrastructure is in place.
 - Some of this work is planned to be accomplished with the Missoula BUILD grant, if it is funded.

- **Please make sure emergency vehicle access routes are used only as intended.** There is an access route from the alley south of Hellgate Meadows into the Mullan Reserve apartment complex that is clearly marked "Fire Department Access Only" (see attachment 1), but it is used as a road by residents. This creates unsafe traffic (too fast) in the alley, and because apartment residents often park in or adjacent to the alley, it blocks garbage truck and emergency vehicle access from Dublin street to the alley and on into the apartment complex. Please have the appropriate City departments work with the Mullan Reserve complex owners to correct this situation.
 - Please change regulations so that property owners are not allowed to change emergency vehicle access into general access roads.

Thank you for your attention to these issues.

Antony Jo
on behalf of the Captain John Mullan Neighborhood Council

Lianna Waller
Janie Cook
John Hancock
Gary Wanberg
Kathie Snodgrass
Steve Schmidt