

FROM: Brian Beinlich
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DATE: June 11, 2010

TO: Washington County Board of Commissioners

RE: Your proposal to designate both side of boundary roads as "urban"

Dear Commissioners:

It has come to my attention that you are proposing to change the designation of 212 acres of land from "rural" to "urban". These changes are being requested in order to "double load" these roads.

This is a bad idea, for multiple reasons.

According to an informal e-mail exchange with Dave Schamp, Manager of Washington County Roads and Maintenance (and RROMAC chair), an urban designation on the "rural side" would likely require the county to improve the rural side of the road to urban standards, which commonly includes sidewalks and landscaping.

These unnecessary improvements would increase the cost of the roads, which is paid out of SDC funds. This would either have the effect of reducing the amount of SDC funds available for other projects, or it would cause SDCs to rise. Either way, the cost of developing the urban side of the road would increase. Such increased costs would be passed on to home buyers or industrial site occupants, making these areas less competitive.

SDCs only pay for capital expenditures. The ongoing maintenance of the sidewalks and landscaping is the responsibility of the landowner. Farmers would need to spend time and money on maintenance, distracting them from farming and placing a further financial and time burden on them. This makes no sense.

"Urban-level" improvements would also give the impression that urbanization is eventually coming to the rural side of the road, when in fact, no urbanization would be allowed for 50 years because the land is in rural reserves.

Maintaining rural reserve designation for the rural side of boundary roads is the best way to protect our agricultural land and our farmers' ability to continue farming. I oppose all of these types of requests.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Brian Beinlich
Save Helvetia Steering Committee Member
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