



DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

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Attn: Amy Luft
COMPASS
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RE: Comments on Communities in Motion 2040 Growth Scenarios

To whom it may concern,

Thank you for the considerable efforts that have been undertaken in conjunction with the Communities in Motion 2040 Growth Scenarios. All four of the scenarios are evaluated by indicators that are very important to healthy and sustainable growth of this valley.

There are two major indicators that are particularly important to the economic success of the valley. These are the promotion of mixed use density and the preservation of open space and agriculture amenities.

Mixed use density achieves a number of desired effects. Dense development creates considerably more tax revenue. For example in 2010 single family home in Garden City was valued at \$287,400. The value of this home is less than another Garden City home valued at \$311,800. However, the home that was valued at \$287,400 is on .012 acres whereas the other home is on 2.05 acres. In this example the denser development produces 157 times the tax revenue on a per acre basis.

Additionally, density also reduces the cost of infrastructure and services on a per capita basis. An example of the reduction in costs for the denser development would be cost per unit to operate and maintain roadway. If one mile of road costs \$1000 a year to operate and maintain then a road servicing 100 units would require \$10 from each unit to maintain the road, whereas if the road services 1,500 units it could be operated and maintained for \$0.67 from each unit.



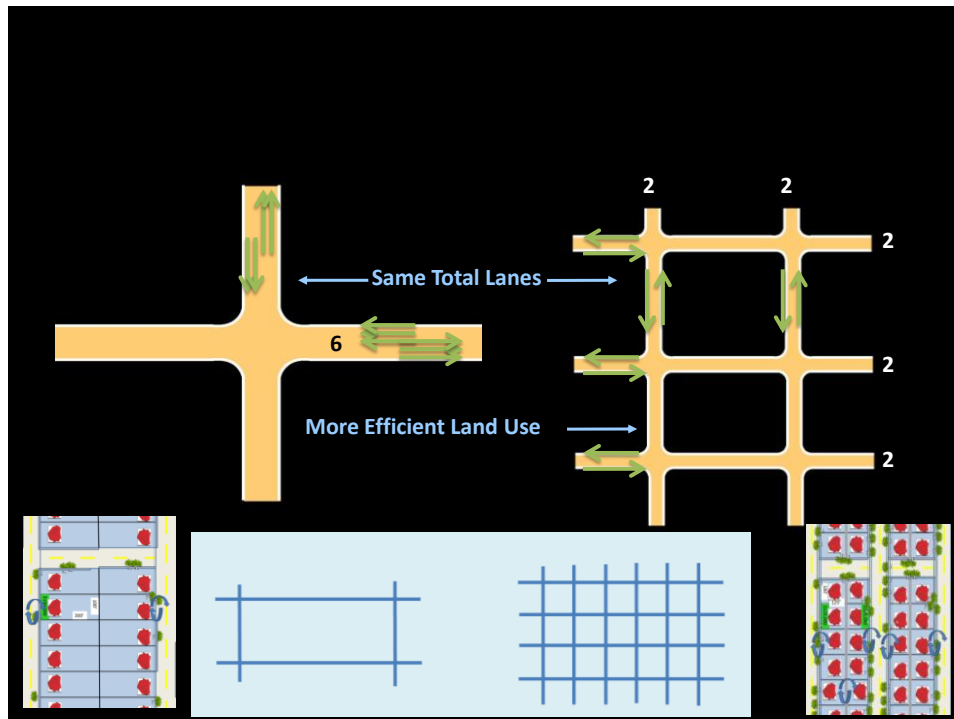
Finally, studies indicate that a significant portion of the population is trending towards smaller homes and yards within walking distance to community resources and

services. Naturally cities create a desirable place for people to live, work and recreate due to the fact that dense mixed use maximizes the ability for the exchange of commerce, culture and resources while reducing the need for travel. Infill development will allow for this type of housing choice that is currently under supplied.

While dense mixed use development attracts people; preservation of usable open spaces such as the foothills and farm land is vital as well. Outdoor recreation is one of the Treasure Valley's key amenities that sets it apart from other regions. This amenity is acutely important to attracting the entrepreneurial populous who are looking for a recreational way of life. Also, agriculture remains important in this region which is currently amplified by the movement of supporting local agriculture. Allowing for development to encroach on agricultural land makes it difficult for the property to maintain its current use.

Active Corridor Scenario

From comments received and distributed by Compass the Active Corridor scenario seems to be trending as the most popular scenario, however, it raises some concerns. While regional corridor roadways are important to move traffic between communities they have the tendency to fragment the communities they pass through. If a regional corridor is not coupled with a healthy local roadway system it will promote sprawl and decrease densities. The below image is of two different roadway systems with the same capacity. The image on the left would be indicative of a typical arterial street, whereas the image on the right would be of a local roadway network. The local roadway network allows for denser development with adjacent land uses that could be either commercial or residential in nature.



Parents are unlikely to allow their children to cross an arterial to go to school, vehicular corridors can be so congested that adjacent businesses cannot be accessed during rush hour and they do not create a friendly environment for non-motorist to be in. Projects such as complete local streets, safe routes to school, transit, bikeways, multi-use pathways, etc. create a positive place to live, work and play.

Hometown Scenario

In the hometowns scenario growth would occur in the traditionally agriculture oriented small towns. This may have the effect of creating a population base that is just big enough that the residents would have to drive to other communities for work while still not creating densities great enough to support transit.

Outdoor Play Scenario

The positive aspect of the Outdoor Play scenario is that the economic growth of the valley is correlated to the quality outdoor recreation that the young educated class is attracted to.

Town and Country Scenario

Of the four growth scenarios the Town and County scenario best achieves the goals most important to sustainable growth of the Treasure Valley. This scenario focuses on existing communities rather than regional corridors, thus capitalizing on the existing and planned municipal infrastructure and preservation of open space and farmland. The indicator comparisons of walkability and transit may be skewed unfavorably because the 'country' areas are diluted in this scenario. Rural areas are by nature not 'walkable', however employment and living centers should be. This scenario would facilitate the opportunity to create a robust transit system and walkability in existing cities.

Recommended additions

While there have been a lot of thoughtful efforts utilizing the input of many stakeholders the intent of the plan should be to identify a common vision that all of the stakeholders to adhere to. The municipalities that are the major stakeholders in the region have already created a number of plans that involved considerable time and community outreach. Utilizing these plans would generate stakeholder alliance. Examples of existing plans include: comprehensive plans, water/sewer master plans and master parks and trails plans, etc. Utilizing these plans as a base would identify the way that each municipality intends on growing and ensure capital expenditures by municipalities on items such as water or sewer facilities match roadway expenditures. Once the individual plans create a foundation for the growth scenario, aspects of the individual plans would likely need to be slightly altered in order to make a cohesive plan that correlates with the forecasts.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,



Jenah Thornborrow
Development Services Director

CC: Mayor John, Evans