

**Ashland Meadows
Homeowners Associations**

Paula Skuratowicz, President
October 8, 2013

Troy Brown Jr
Michael Dawkins
Richard Kaplan
Debra Miller
Melanie Mindlin
Bill Molnar
Michael Morris
Tracy Peddicord

Re: Normal Avenue Plan

Dear Commissioners,

Thank you for the considerable progress that has been made in addressing a number of the issues raised by our neighborhoods. One of our remaining major concerns is the decision indicated in the final draft to postpone the public transportation consideration to some point in the future.

We find it irresponsible to talk about decreasing our reliance on the use of automobiles without also addressing the issues of inadequate public transportation in our area. It is noted in the plan that the existing transit route alignment makes the distance to our closest bus stops greater than what is considered a reasonable walking distance of one quarter mile. This is made worse by the fact that our closest bus stops are at Albertson's and Bi-Mart and the stops at Albertson's are infrequent except for in the early morning and late afternoon. Moreover, the bus line does not go up East Main as it had in the past. This makes transportation by bus particularly difficult for working parents and the elderly.

We already know that the development of the Baptist Church property will approximately double the population in the immediate area. This means that unless there are substantial changes in both the number of stops and the route of the bus service, people in the new development will be forced into using automobiles. It is very clear these changes need to occur at the time of development, not at some future time. That is just passing the buck for someone else to address the problem.

This issue of public transportation is further complicated by the prospect that the Baptist Church property may well be the only property developed for quite a while. Unfortunately, most of the connecting roads and pathways may not be constructed until years later when other areas of the Normal Neighborhood are developed. This further increases the need for increased and closer access to bus transit to be available at the beginning of the project not at some unknown future time. In the High Density Housing and Transportation White Paper prepared in 2011 for the City of Ashland's Planning and Transportation Commission, it was stated that "residential units are the most important land use factor in increasing ridership." Generally agreed on densities for transit service as applied to our zoning would require 1 bus per hour for low density land use, 1 bus every 30 minutes for medium, and 1 bus every 10 minutes for high density use. This definitely applies to the Baptist Church property.

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From: Ashland Meadows HOA

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I have personally had experience with this problem. One holiday season I worked at a temporary job in Medford and rode on the early #10 bus. After my first day at work, I realized the cold and distance to walk to the bus stop made it too difficult for me. My husband ended up driving me every morning to the Safeway stop-which had the additional advantage of a covered place to sit while waiting for the bus. Without a person with access to a car dropping me off, I would never have been able to continue working. If there was a bus stop on East Main, I could have easily walked without the necessity of using a car.