

# Memo

CITY OF  
ASHLAND

Date: June 8, 2020  
From: Scott Fleury PE, Interim Public Works Director  
To: Planning Commission  
RE: Grand Terrace Annexation-Transportation Commission Comments

## **Background:**

Below is a series of comments generated by the Transportation Commission with respect to the Grand Terrace Development project and its associated connection to the local transportation network. In addition, numerous goals with focused objectives were established in the 2013 Transportation System Plan. These goals and objectives have been included for reference as they are important and should be wholly considered when new development enters the planning process as part of the system of approvals.

## **TSP Goals:**

### ***Goal #1:***

Create a “green” template for other communities in the state and nation to follow.

### ***Objectives for Goal 1:***

1B. Expand active transportation infrastructure to include features that encourage non-auto travel. Potential features include bicycle boulevards, bicycle lanes, wider bicycle trails, and improved lighting for bicycles and pedestrians.

1D. Develop plans for pedestrian-oriented, mixed land-use activity centers with an active transportation focus and green infrastructure.

1E. Identify ways to reduce carbon impacts through changes to land use patterns and transportation choices to make travel by bicycle, as a pedestrian and by transit more viable.

1G. Implement environmentally responsible or green design standards.

### ***Goal #2:***

Make safety a priority for all modes of travel.

### ***Objectives for Goal 2:***

2E. Recommend appropriate means for managing state highways and major arterials to meet local and through traffic needs in terms of mobility, access, and safety.

### ***Goal #3:***

Maintain small-town character, support economic prosperity and accommodate future growth.

### ***Objectives for Goal 3:***

3B. Consider modal equity when integrating land use and transportation to provide travel options for system users.

3C. Identify opportunities, guidelines and regulations for bicycle, pedestrian and transit supportive land uses within the City of Ashland.

3D. Identify transportation projects or system adjustments that improve development potential and support increased mixed use development within the current Urban Growth Boundary.

3E. Identify adjustments to transportation and land use codes and regulations that will facilitate higher density developments in transit corridors, and shorter trip length and non-motorized modes of travel throughout the City of Ashland.

**Goal #4:**

Create a system-wide balance for serving and facilitating pedestrian, bicycle, rail, air, transit, and vehicular traffic in terms of mobility and access within and through the City of Ashland.

**Objectives for Goal 4:**

4C. Upgrade pedestrian facilities to ADA compliant standards.

4G. Create a comprehensive transportation system by better integrating active transportation modes with transit and travel by auto.

**Transportation Commission Comments:**

**General:**

The Grand Terrace project has the potential for adding vehicular traffic and creating congestion, or it could provide a sustainable development showcase that aligns with Ashland's values developed as goals and objectives in the Transportation System Plan and the Climate Energy Action Plan. It is on an established transit line. There is great potential for bike facilities, shared vehicles, electric charging infrastructure, permeable parking lots, bike path and trail development, not to mention solar and other sufficiency's, like stormwater filtration systems and community gardens. Pedestrian and bicyclist scale lighting needs to be considered along the project length in order to provide safety for these modes at night.

**Speed:**

Speed reduction along this part of 99 needs to be considered (to Valley View) along with the physical/environmental changes that facilitate a driver to slow down.

(see comment regarding speed associated with bicycle connectivity below)

Speed reduction needs to consider the potential queuing increased at Valley View and Highway 99 intersection.

**Ingress/Egress:**

There is concern about egress from the proposed driveway location, specifically a left-hand turn movement heading northbound with limited site distance along with potential right-hand ingress movements occurring into the development. Appropriate signage and striping should be considered and installed to reduce conflicts and make drivers aware.

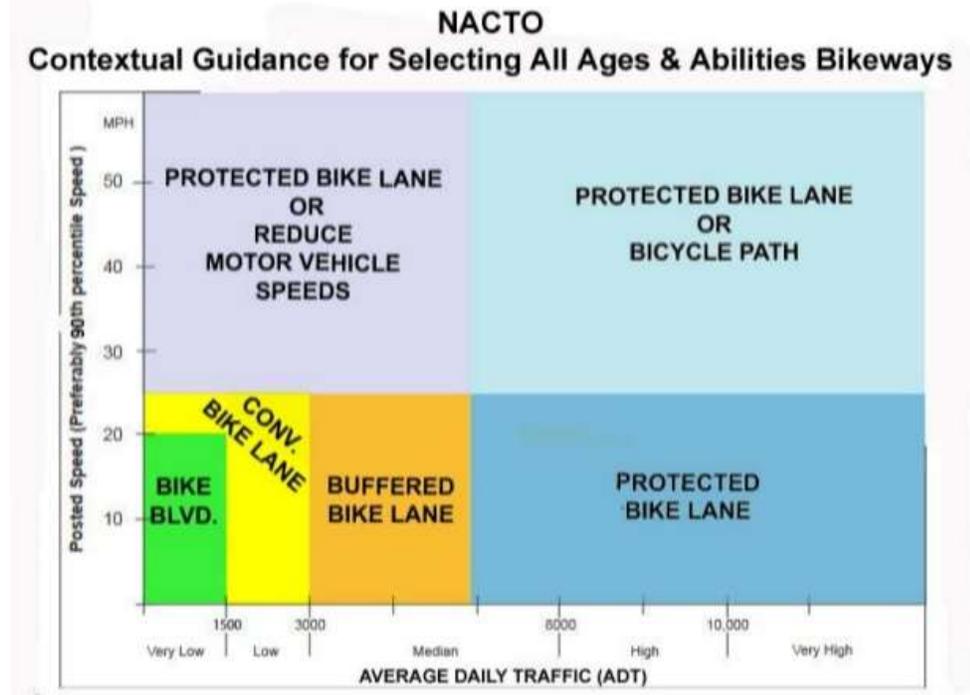
**Pedestrian connectivity:**

The pedestrian connection is adequate (southbound) as proposed, but safety is still a concern and speed reduction should be considered along the corridor to the intersection with Valley View. In addition, a physical barrier is needed to separate the southbound bike lane and sidewalk from the traffic lane. If width is a problem, better to slightly narrow the sidewalk/parkrow to accommodate a physical barrier. (See NACTO guidance chart below for a separated facility based on speed/volume).

Concerns regarding the increased density and its effects on pedestrian/cyclist safety, in particular crossing the highway near or in front of the project.

### Bicycle connectivity:

Bicycle connectivity is minimally adequate southbound; northbound is problematic as this requires dangerous merging with auto traffic to access the left turn lane into the property. Reduction of the speed limit to 35 mph and/or crosswalk would provide safety needed. Current standards associated with the speed and volume of the roadway in the current condition call for a protected bike facility, not just a striped buffer. If left-hand turn egress for cyclists cannot be improved a contraflow bike facility should be considered northbound to the protected signal crossing.



### Transit connectivity:

Southbound would be minimally adequate with upgrading of flag stop at North Main (Ashland Mine Road) to at least signed stop. (I was walked, and it does fall – barely – within five minutes even for a senior walking uphill.) However, the proposed dedicated stop in front of property is preferred if bus merging can be accommodated. Again, this would greatly benefit from reduction of speed limit to 35 mph.

Transit connectivity northbound is very problematic. Existing stop at Valley View is too far away. Crossing safely to access flag stop at North Main (Ashland Mine Road) requires significant upgrading of the crosswalk and median refuge facility. If striping and flashing signal cannot be assured, I am not certain that signage and new median refuge would be adequate. Accordingly, public transit use with current RVTD transit model (full size buses only) would likely be limited. Significant public transit use in both directions would require new transit models, likely on flexible routes and employing smaller vehicles able to turn around at or enter into the property.