



Rithy KHUT &lt;rithy.khut@multco.us&gt;

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## Fwd: Comprehensive Plan Updates

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Rich FAITH <rich.faith@multco.us>  
To: Rithy Khut <rithy.khut@multco.us>

Mon, Aug 15, 2016 at 11:34 AM

Dear Chair and Commissioners,

My name is Ron Strasser. I live in the University Park Neighborhood in North Portland. I hope you can take the time to read through my comments.

I grew up quite poor in the eastern Oregon town of Nyssa. In this day and age, the breaks my alcoholic parents got back in the 50s-60s from landlords would not take place and we would probably be homeless. But that was then. At any rate it is part of my perspective on things in life like Comprehensive Plan Updates.

Metro has taken on the tough task of taking care of our green spaces and parks at a time when increasing population demands on our metro area are enormous. Their science and work with other governmental agencies is extensive and well thought through. They understand that it is a crucial part of our future to allow non motorized human access to parks as well as protect the flora and fauna. As a long time member of very important organizations like "The Nature Conservancy", "National Wildlife Federation" and "1000 Friends of Oregon" I understand the importance of our wild areas, farmlands and waterways. Protecting these things are key to our survival. I am also a member of "The Bicycle Transportation Alliance" and "Northwest Trail Alliance" that are very important voices for human powered transportation as well as promotion of healthy lifestyles, and support for our beautiful natural areas where we love to spend time.

I managed to get through my (tough row) of a childhood and then had somewhat of a miracle my senior year of high school. It was spring of 1967. I had zero plans for my future other than to graduate in June. The one councilor in my school sent for me. I did not know if I was in trouble or what. He told me he had arranged for me to get a "work study job" at Treasure Valley Comm. Col. in Ontario. I had no idea what it meant. He explained, so I decided I would give it a go.

Worked my fanny off in the fields and warehouses all summer and ended up making it trough a Bachelors Degree at Oregon State after transferring. What a gift! I could have ended up not surviving the Vietnam War. This is real. I am hear and classmates I went to school with are simply gone. They do not exist. They never had a chance. By being alive and having the "ability" (thank you steady job and retirement) and "desire" to explore(thank you teachers and mentors) what life and this beautiful earth has, is a option every person living in Multnomah County (and the planet for that matter) needs to have. All people, no matter the family income or color of their skin need to have easy access to the wonder of our close in natural areas on foot, by bike or horse. It is crucial for the health of our population. The simple fact that people getting out into nature (especially if they are getting exercise) will not only be more healthy for it, but will want to keep these places well cared for is easy to understand. Our ability in this day and age to build trails that are sustainable and have little long-lasting impact on the plants and animals is well documented. Most of the people who want to limit human access are either people who live near a green space or mistakenly think a green space within the metro area is a "wilderness area". The first reason is selfish, the second is just not a fact. The science shows that. We need to allow access to these green spaces and parks by those who cannot get into the \$40,000 SUV and drive to the beach, Mt. Hood or Bend to recreate. This is the right thing to do for the planet. We must learn to take those types of trips less frequently. It is an environmental win / win to not only take care of our green spaces here at home, but also have access for recreation in them. Way better use of energy! I urge you to adopt the language changes to the Comprehensive Plan proposed by Metro. They are common sense and are in

the best interest of not just the green spaces / parks, but the region and ever growing population. There needs to be intelligent use of these areas to protect both the wild and human life who share them!

Forgive my wordiness and I thank you very much if you read through this. I am very passionate that all the families as well as nature are treated with fairness by our elected leaders, civil servants and the many business leaders and NPOs that impact our County and Region. Your words (in this case document language) have an impact on the future of many children. Give them an opportunity many do not even know exists. Imagine what you would feel like listening to kids at school talking about a trip to the beach, an adventure on Mt. Hood biking or to Bend to ski.....when your family car is not dependable enough to leave Portland or Gresham. Yet your

cheap old bike sits at the side of the house because your parents won't let you ride it because of car danger. Give them some hope and dignity with a field of dreams for them.

Regards and thank you so much for your great efforts as community leaders.

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