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CITY OF SALEM  
PUBLIC WORKS

January 18, 2018

Re: Lone Oak Road Reimbursement District

Hearing date: January 22, 2018

To the Public Works Director and Members of the City Council,

I and my wife are the owners of 1.5 acres within the proposed Lone Oak Reimbursement District; our address is 6685 Trillium Lane SE. I am a tenured professor at Willamette University, and my wife is a speech-language pathologist and bilingual specialist in the Salem-Keizer School District. We are property owners in both the city and here in the county who gladly pay our property taxes and who always vote in support of measures that fund education, public health, and public safety. We are, to put it simply, believers in the public commons, in paying our share, and in recognizing that government needs resources to pay for collective goods.

But this reimbursement district is not a question of the public good; it seems to be an effort by one property owner to use city procedures to induce other property owners to supplement their development gains when they develop their property. **We vehemently object to the creation of this reimbursement district.**

In the notice we received, the "Summary of Process" states that a reimbursement district can be formed when "a developer constructs improvements that benefit neighboring properties." By this standard, the proposed district is fundamentally backward on two counts. First, **there will be no benefit – zero – to us and to most of the property owners around us who are included in the proposed district.** We will never use this road to get anywhere we don't already travel using county and city roads to get to; to do so would be less direct and slower, not more direct nor faster. Moreover, it will bring no additional commerce or other benefits into our part of town. And, we have already paid for these existing roads, via our tax dollars.

Second, **all of the property owners who might benefit from this – those that live on Sahalee Court, on Lone Oak Rd SE, and on Augusta St SE – are curiously drawn outside of the reimbursement district!!!** All of these properties have a single access road – Devon Ave. SE – and would be the proximate property owners who would have some benefit from the continuation of Loan Oak Road creating a second, northward access road. Why are they not included in the proposed reimbursement district?

The proposal is also illogical because the road extension is not necessary for the development of the property in question. I can see why this will be a *convenience* to the developer (and will likely increase the money the developer makes from it.) But the property to be developed has access to Sahalee Court. If they can't afford to develop the roads they want themselves, they can still develop their land.

Finally, I trust that this is a detail that would not be accidentally overlooked, but I would question whether the City of Salem has the authority to impose such a district onto county residents. Is this actually even legal?

This proposed Reimbursement District is simply unfair to the people it will include. Please do the right thing and reject this proposal.

Very sincerely,



Kelley Strawn and Alejandra Reyes  
6685 Trillium Lane SE  
Salem, OR 97306  
503-581-0459