

Amy Johnson

From: FRICKE Daniel L <Daniel.L.FRICKE@odot.state.or.us>
Sent: Tuesday, October 6, 2020 12:18 PM
To: CityRecorder
Cc: Lisa Anderson-Ogilvie; Bryce Bishop; MCGILL Galen E; SHADDIX Jason P; BLACKETER Ronald M * Ron; WILSON Laura L; CHICKERING Sonny P; NELL Lisa D; Matt Hastie; Courtney Simms
Subject: October 12, 2020 City Council Hearing - Council File #20-379 - CPC-NPC-ZC20-04
Attachments: Council File #20-379-CPC-NPC-ZC20-04.pdf

Please enter the attached correspondence into the record for the subject public hearing on October 12, 2020. You may contact me if you have any questions.

Dan Fricke, Senior Transportation Planner
ODOT Region 2
455 Airport Road SE, Building B
Salem, OR 97301-5395
Ph: 503-986-2663 C: 503-507-0391
E-mail: daniel.l.fricke@odot.state.or.us



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Department of Transportation

Region 2 Headquarters

455 Airport Road SE Building B
Salem, Oregon 97301-5395
Telephone (503) 986-2600
Fax (503) 986-2630

DATE: October 6, 2020

TO: Mayor Chuck Bennett and Council Members
Salem City Council

SUBJECT: Proposed Applications for Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Change, ODOT Sign and Signal Shop Property (File CPC-NPC-ZC20-04 – Council File #20-379)

Mayor Bennett and Members of the Salem City Council:

I am writing to comment on the proposed Zoning and Comprehensive Plan amendments for the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) Traffic Systems Services Unit (TSSU) Property and to urge you to uphold the Planning Commission's recommendation to rezone the site to ensure that ODOT can continue to operate this facility in a way that meets the needs of our agency and local cities and counties around the state that also use the facility's services for maintenance and testing of equipment and training of staff.

ODOT has owned land at this site for nearly 50 years and has operated this facility as the TSSU for most of that time. ODOT records indicate that it began developing the TSSU facilities within the existing building on the site in approximately 1972. This pre-dates adoption of the Highland Neighborhood Plan (1984), the Salem Multiple Family Residential Lands Study, and rezoning of the Multi-Family Residential portion of the site (late 1990s), and likely predates many of the Development Code provisions currently applied to the site. Since that time, ODOT has invested a significant level of resources in this site. The facility is used to configure, test, repair and store signs and signals used on highways across the state, as well as similar equipment operated by local cities and counties in Oregon, including the City of Salem. As a result, this facility provides a significant public benefit to thousands of people traveling in Oregon on a daily basis, including residents of Salem who live and work both in and outside of the neighborhood where the facility is located. Denying our application will not prevent ODOT from using the facility completely but it would require us to store some of the equipment that we test and configure at the site at other locations, resulting in significant expense to our agency and Oregon taxpayers. It also would hamper any ability to expand our operations or improve the facility in any significant way, given its non-conforming status. We should note, however, that ODOT has no plans to make improvements to or expand the facility.

We understand that one of the primary concerns about the rezoning is a potential loss of land zoned for multi-family residential and commercial use. However, as stated in the findings that accompanied our application, the City's own Housing Needs Analysis indicates that our site was not considered as future capacity for residential development in the City's buildable lands inventory. The study states that the following types of properties were excluded from the inventory:

"properties where the existing land use excludes or essentially precludes any future development. Examples include publicly-owned lands; designated open spaces; GIS parcels representing water bodies; power lines, electrical substations, water towers or reservoirs, etc.;"

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and airport expansion areas. Publicly-owned lands were evaluated and many (not all) were excluded because they are not intended to convert to residential use during the planning period.

The ODOT TSSU site was indicated as "excluded" in the inventory for this reason.

City staff also has noted a concern about a potential loss of commercially zoned land with rezoning of the property to the Public Service designation. Similar to the City's Housing Needs Analysis, the City's Economic Opportunities Analysis (EOA) assigns very little capacity for future commercial development to the commercially zoned portion of the TSSU site. The EOA does not assign capacity to "developed" properties. All but a small portion of the ODOT site is designated as developed in the City's EOA. Even that portion of the site indicated as "vacant" in the EOA (between 0.08 and 0.16 acres) is in fact used for vehicle maneuvering and equipment storage by ODOT. As a result, rezoning the commercial portion of the site essentially would result in a loss of only a small fraction of an acre of land capacity, if any, according to the City's EOA.

Furthermore, our agency is committed to the continued use of this site and facility for our operations. Until such time as we choose to cease operations there, this property will not represent any potential for additional residential or commercial development in Salem. If ODOT were to stop using the site in the future, we would be willing to work with the City to rezone the site again to a designation that best meets long-term future community needs. Until such time, zoning this site for its longstanding use will not have any impact on its potential for future housing or commercial uses.

We also note that there has been no public opposition to rezoning this site. The Highland Neighborhood Association supports the rezoning (see Staff Report Attachments G and H). The City of Salem's Traffic Signal Maintenance Supervisor also submitted a letter in support of our application to the City (attached). No written comments or verbal testimony in opposition to the proposal were submitted in advance of or during the Planning Commission hearing. Again, we urge you to affirm the Planning Commission's recommendation.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Daniel L. Fricke
Senior Transportation Planner

cc: Lisa Anderson-Ogilvie
Bryce Bishop
Galen McGill
Jason Shaddix
Ron Blacketer
Laura Wilson
Sonny Chickering
Lisa Nell
Matt Hastie
Courtney Sims

To: Bryce Bishop, Planner II, City of Salem, BBishop@cityofsalem.net, and Lisa Anderson-Ogilvie, Planning Administrator, City of Salem, lmanderson@cityofsalem.net

Re: Proposed Applications for Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Change, ODOT Sign and Signal Shop Property (Application Numbers: 20-108131-ZO; 20-110268-ZO; 20-108135-ZO)

Mr. Bishop and Ms. Anderson-Ogilvie,

I am writing to voice my support for the proposed Zoning and Comprehensive Plan amendments for the ODOT Sign and Signal Shop Property. That facility provides very important services to our city and our community. Ultimately, it helps us improve traffic safety which has significant benefits to the public here and elsewhere in Oregon. We appreciate our partnership with ODOT and want to see the Sign and Signal Shop continue to operate effectively and efficiently.

This facility helps us keep the traffic signals running, as well as tests and verifies every new cabinets that come into Salem, as well as other agencies in Oregon. They are also a great partner for the city, as we often use their knowledge for our troubleshooting of traffic signal issues, as well as their equipment, if we happen to be out of stock at the time of need. TSSU also performs traffic signal training that is critical to our staying up to date on the latest equipment and technologies in the traffic industry.

I would strongly recommend that you approve ODOT's request to rezone the property to allow it to continue to meet these essential public needs and benefits.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Eric Schunk

Traffic Signal Maintenance Supervisor

City of Salem