From:	Megan Smith
To:	County Commissioners; council@townofjackson.com
Cc:	Brian Schilling; Sean O"Malley
Subject:	Fwd: Comments on Jackson"s Y Intersection Construction Plans
Date:	Sunday, November 20, 2016 12:07:25 PM

Dear Council and Commission -

I am sharing with you my comments to WYDOT regarding the Y intersection reconfiguration and construction (below). I have deep concerns regarding this project on several levels including traffic flow, safety, implications for the surrounding intersections, negative impacts for mid-town residents (of which I am one), pathways and WYDOT not abiding by their own environmental regulations for Categorical Exclusions. Additionally, this construction project has direct, negative impacts on land planning efforts that you all have worked so hard to create and implement (Comprehensive Plan and the ITP). My comments to WYDOT below are merely the tip of the iceberg. As you all know, each of these elements could be taken through a much deeper analysis. My request to WYDOT is that they upgrade the light, maintain the flow of traffic from Buffalo Way to Hwy 22 and use the time the current intersection affords them to properly redesign and analyze this intersection for the safety of all (traffic, mid-town residents, pedestrians and cyclists). My request to you is that you hold WYDOT to a higher standard that takes into account your planning efforts, the surrounding intersections and the best interest of our citizen's and visitor's safety.

Thank you very much for all your efforts on the behalf of our community. I stand willing and able to provide more information or answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Megan Smith

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Megan Smith** <megansmith33@gmail.com>
Date: Sun, Nov 20, 2016 at 11:48 AM
Subject: Comments on Jackson's Y Intersection Construction Plans
To: stephanie.harsha@wyo.gov
Cc: nick.hines@wyo.gov

Dear WYDOT Representatives,

Thank you for considering public comment on Jackson’s Y intersection between Highway 22, Broadway and Buffalo Way. I have some deep concerns about the design and models that were presented in Jackson this last week.

I am a resident of the “mid-town” section of Jackson which is directly adjacent to this intersection. This is one of the most densely population areas in town and, under the Comprehensive Plan, we are slated for more building and an increase in population density in this section of town. Not only do we have a number of businesses (e.g. Albertson’s, Lucky’s, the largest USPS in town, coffee shops, small businesses, physical therapists, dentists, an outpatient surgery center, restaurants, etc. etc.) but we also have a large number of condominium associations, apartment buildings and access to recreational opportunities such as one of the most popular trailheads on the Bridger-Teton National Forest. In short, there are a lot of people, at all times of day, that access mid-town and much of this access, to and from, happens through the Y intersection. In addition to my residential location, I also work in an office located immediately at the Buffalo Way and Maple Way intersection and am keenly familiar with the traffic problems that persist here.

I was dismayed by your traffic model in that cars traveling south on Buffalo Way disappeared before they made it to Maple Way. This intersection was clearly not considered in your model. Please allow me to explain to you what traffic does at this intersection under our current situation. This is an extremely busy intersection. It is already often difficult to turn off of Buffalo Way onto Maple in either direction. The traffic from the Kmart light will frequently back up to near this intersection as does the traffic from the USPS 4-way between Maple and Powderhorn (to the east). I am extremely concerned about semi-truck trailers leaving Albertson’s and needing to travel south to Maple Way in order to access the highway. I honestly do not think that a semi can make the corner between Buffalo Way and Maple Way. There are frequently parked cars on every imaginable side of these streets and I truly don’t think there is room for a semi. Additionally, the increased danger from adding trailer truck traffic to this area where there are bus stops (public and school), a cross-walk and several businesses is not something that I would imaging WYDOT would like to be responsible for. I strongly encourage you to reinstate the exit from Buffalo Way traveling straight through the intersection and onto Hwy 22. To say that emissions will be decreased is totally incorrect. You will be forcing all of the residents and users of mid-town to drive around the block in one direction or the other in order to access Hwy 22. Adding a light with increased efficiency and detection abilities would improve this intersection while maintaining the ability to cross straight from Buffalo to Hwy 22.

At the open house meeting, I had a pleasant discussion with Nick Hines. By day I am an environmental consultant and I have completed several WYDOT Categorical Exclusions (CEs) for pathways projects. Therefore, I am very familiar with both WYDOT’s process and requirements. Based on my discussion with Nick, it was clear to me that WYDOT has not considered all of the aspects of a CE that your own regulations require of projects. I do not feel that this project qualifies for a categorical exclusion. By definition, CEs can only be used for actions that “ *do not induce significant impacts to planned growth or land use for the area; do not require the relocation of significant numbers of people; do not have a significant impact on any natural, cultural, recreational, historic or other resource; do not involve significant air, noise, or water quality impacts; do not have significant impacts on travel patterns; or do not otherwise, either individually or cumulatively, have any significant environmental impacts.”* (23 CFR §771.117 (a)). I would put forth that your current plan for the Y intersection has significant impact to planned growth and travel patterns for the area in that it will negatively affect the Jackson/ Teton County Comprehensive Plan’s vision for this

neighborhood and our already busy, but functional, travel flows. My concern is that this one change at the Y will render our neighborhood non-functional in terms of travel flow. Furthermore, it will negatively affect already strained traffic patterns rippling out to adjacent intersections along Maple and Snow King Ave. This is a major cross town route for both cars and bicycles and the additional traffic numbers forced on this route will have a significant, negative effect. The Integrated Transportation Plan is another key element to our land use planning for the area and I believe the proposed changes to the Y intersection will have significant, negative impacts to the goals of the Integrated Travel Plan. Second, I believe that you have not taken the pathways system into consideration with your planning of the intersection. The maps that I was examining at the open house did not display the existing pathways or the cycle tracks. If you're not putting them on the map, you're not considering them! Our community recently put a lot of work into these pathways and they are receiving a tremendous amount of use by both locals and visitors. To take an already tricky intersection and make it completely unsafe for pedestrians and bicyclists is unethical.

Lastly, I learned at the meeting that this "temporary" fix to this intersection will only gain four more years to the life of the intersection. This does not seem like a good use of taxpayer money to only extend the life of an intersection by four years while also causing significant, negative impacts to the adjacent neighborhood, adjoining pathways system and town/ county land planning efforts. Therefore, I request that you do not do this "temporary" fix which does not even abide by the requirements of your own policies. Rather I would like to see WYDOT take the ensuing eight years that are available to you under your estimates for the current intersection and redesign an intersection that has traffic calming attributes, is beneficial to pedestrian and bicyclist, works with the already established land planning documents and goals our community has worked hard to establish, and incorporates changes to traffic flow that will result once the Indian Trails Connector is built. In the meantime, an upgrade to the light at the Y without changing the traffic flow from its current configuration does seem like a positive step forward for both traffic flow on Broadway and for the adjoining neighborhoods.

Thank you for incorporating my concerns into your planning process.

Sincerely,

Megan A Smith