



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Transportation and Growth Management Program

*A joint program of the Department of Transportation and
the Department of Land Conservation and Development*

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March 18, 2015

Heidi Blaine, MPA
City Manager
City of Donald
10710 Main St.
P.O. Box 388
Donald, OR 97020

Re: City of Donald TSP Assessment

Heidi,

Transportation System Plan (TSP) assessments are designed and used to evaluate a local jurisdiction's TSP against Transportation Growth Management (TGM) objectives that have been identified as common issues in TSP's across the state. TGM is a joint program housed at the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD). Assessments are normally used to identify potential changes, updates or revisions recommended for existing TSP's and are primarily intended to assist local governments wishing to file TGM grant applications for the purpose of updating their TSP's, as the you have indicated the City of Donald wishes to do.

I have reviewed the City of Donald's Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan, the City's development code, relevant transportation information, and aerial photography of the City from Google Earth, and offer the following assessment of the City's existing Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

Focus of Transportation Planning

Due to the relatively small population size of the City of Donald, we recommend that the City consider a TSP update that employs a narrower focus to answer three basic questions – What does the City need? What does the City want? And finally, what can the City afford to fund and build? By answering these three fundamental questions, the City can determine what it needs in a new TSP or if it needs a full TSP rather than the more limited transportation planning the City currently has in place.

Since the City of Donald's Comprehensive Plan only has a Transportation Element that functions as its TSP, but does not currently have an adopted full TSP, an update would need to start

virtually from scratch to write a new TSP and concurrently, update the existing Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

Please keep in mind that the city may request a whole or partial exemption to the requirements of the Transportation Planning Rule (TPR) from the director because of the city's small population size (under 10,000). The TPR requirements for this whole or partial exemption are contained in OAR 660-012-0055(6). Please see the footnote below for the more specific language contained in the TPR rule section.¹

20-Year Population

The 20-year planning horizon in the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan has long since expired according to the information I have available. A TSP update for the City needs to include a new and updated 20-year planning horizon for transportation planning. The City's population growth numbers and rate used in the 20-year TSP planning horizon should be the same as, or substantially aligned with, the latest 20-year coordinated population projection and growth rate for the City from Marion County, the jurisdiction responsible for the City's coordinated population projection. According to the information we have, Marion County's latest adopted coordinated population projection for the City runs from 2010 to 2030.

¹ (6) The director may grant a whole or partial exemption from the requirements of this division to cities under 10,000 population and counties under 25,000 population, and for areas within a county within an urban growth boundary that contains a population less than 10,000. Eligible jurisdictions may request that the director approve an exemption from all or part of the requirements in this division. Exemptions shall be for a period determined by the director or until the jurisdiction's next periodic review, whichever is shorter.

(a) The director's decision to approve an exemption shall be based upon the following factors:

- (A) Whether the existing and committed transportation system is generally adequate to meet likely transportation needs;
- (B) Whether the new development or population growth is anticipated in the planning area over the next five years;
- (C) Whether major new transportation facilities are proposed which would affect the planning areas;
- (D) Whether deferral of planning requirements would conflict with accommodating state or regional transportation needs; and
- (E) Consultation with the Oregon Department of Transportation on the need for transportation planning in the area, including measures needed to protect existing transportation facilities.

(b) The director's decision to grant an exemption under this section is appealable to the commission as provided in OAR 660-002-0020 (Delegation of Authority Rule)

Needed TSP Elements

The requirements for preparation of a TSP are contained in the TPR – OAR 660, division 12. The City should review those requirements for applicability to the planned transportation/TSP update. Our review shows that the street standards and requirements contained in the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan do not match those contained in the City's much newer Development Code. Any update should work to ensure consistency among the City's adopted planning documents, development code, and the elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

The bicycle and pedestrian plan portion of the dated Transportation Element will need a great deal of additional work to make the City's planned new TSP a true multi-modal plan to serve the city's future transportation needs. It should be reviewed and needed changes incorporated into the new TSP and Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan during the update. A TSP update should discuss planning for and funding completion of the sidewalk and pedestrian network within the City and connecting any recreational trail systems with the existing pedestrian and bicycle network, as well as make sure that streets and highways are made safe and accessible for bicyclists through extensive use of bicycle lanes and other bicycle friendly measures.

The TSP update process should assess whether any additional transportation and/or planning studies related to the City's comprehensive plan and transportation system are needed or have been completed, but not yet incorporated into the City's planning documents. To that end, the city should coordinate updates implicating the state highway system with the ODOT staff in ODOT Region 2.

The City's planned and funded transportation project list (if indeed, such a list exists) should be revised (or prepared) to coincide with the new 20-year planning horizon, with those projects that are already completed removed and those deemed to be no longer appropriate because of changing city priorities and planning direction in the comprehensive plan dropped from the project list.

New transportation projects planned for the next 20 years according to the City's current vision for growth and its adopted comprehensive plan should be included in the list of planned (and funded) transportation projects. The TSP update process should examine whether there is a need for increased spending (dependent on funding availability) on bicycle and pedestrian route connectivity, and road construction and maintenance.

Key Areas

Key areas such as access management, traffic safety, street connectivity, safe routes to schools, bicycle and pedestrian routes and trail system connectivity, and secure funding for road, street, and sidewalk upgrades and maintenance, where necessary, should be studied and incorporated into the TSP. Additionally, we encourage the city to complete and incorporate any additional studies and planning work for alternative modes of transportation and other Smart Growth/TGM principles to help plan for and create a more vibrant, walkable, and connected community.

As part of an update process, the City should work with ODOT Region 2, and the ODOT Freight and ODOT Rail Divisions², where appropriate, to identify and incorporate additional updated multi-modal, and access and corridor management strategies. This should include discussion of the planning for nearby state highways and the nearby Fargo interchange on I-5 that could affect the City's transportation planning.

Greenhouse Gas Reduction

Greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction is an increasingly important part of the state's energy and environment vision and planning. The city could use this opportunity to begin a discussion of future greenhouse gas reduction strategies and ways to reduce reliance on single occupancy motor vehicle travel in and around the city. Such a foundational policy discussion could then be included in the city's updated TSP if the need arises.

DLCD TGM program staff has indicated that they will be reaching out to communities to begin such a discussion. We note that this area of planning ties in well with the City's desire to make the community a more walkable and bikeable multi-modal place according to TGM principles, goals, and objectives.

Other Programs

Other programs and grants are available to the City to assist with transportation needs. These include the Safe Routes to Schools Program and grants available from the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) and are discussed below.

Safe Routes to Schools Program

The Oregon Safe Routes to School Program, housed at ODOT, should be of interest to you as you contemplate updating the City's transportation planning documents. This is a worthwhile program that could benefit the city if any related issues are identified. As noted on the program's website, the program helps communities identify and remove barriers and hazards to children, K-12, walking or biking within two miles of a school.

Contact Julie Yip, program manager, at 503.986.4196 or julie.a.yip@state.or.us for more information or click on the following Internet links <http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TS/saferoutes.shtml> and <http://www.oregonsaferoutes.org/>.

Other Grant Programs

In addition to TGM Program grants, OPRD offers several grant programs that can be used to help improve recreational trail connectivity and access within and through the city, thus improving the City's facilities for a more walkable and bikeable community. These include Local

² A Burlington Northern rail line bisects the City and is discussed in the existing Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan. The rail line is also being considered as an alternative in the Oregon Passenger Rail Project, currently being studied by ODOT.

Government Grants and Recreational Trails Grants, among others. Grant programs available through OPRD are more fully described at <http://www.oregon.gov/OPRD/GRANTS/index.shtml> .

I hope you find this assessment beneficial in planning for an updated Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan and a new TSP. The assessment will assist the City in applying for a TGM grant to accomplish the updated transportation planning. Please contact me by phone at 503-934-0030 or by e-mail at gary.fish@state.or.us if you have any additional questions, comments, or concerns.

Sincerely,



Gary Fish
Land Use and Transportation Planner

Cc: Naomi Zwerdling, ODOT TGM Planner – ODOT Region 2 (e-mail)
Angela Lazarean, DLCD Regional Representative (e-mail)

