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April 5, 2013

Kevin Cook
Multnomah County Land Use and Transportation Program
1600 SE 190th Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97233

Subject: **Sauvie Island/Multnomah Channel Plan Update**

Dear Kevin:

On April 2, 2013, the Board of Directors of the Sauvie Island Community Association (SICA) met to develop SICA's responses to the County's questionnaire regarding our vision for how the island and channel should look in 20 years. We appreciate the opportunity to voice our opinion and submit these comments on behalf of the community association. Because we see a number of areas for improvement, we do encourage the county to move ahead with a revision to the 1997 Sauvie Island/Multnomah Channel Plan and Transportation System Plan.

1. What do you value most about the Sauvie Island community?

SICA values most those aspects of the island that make it unique and livable:

- The island's rural setting and "sense of place", including its openness, its low population, its agriculture setting and wildlife habitat, and its opportunity for recreational activities like fishing, hunting, bird watching, hiking, and boating.
- The "serenity of place" one feels upon coming onto the island – that special, unique quality of the island reflected in its rural agricultural and natural resource character, its openness, its low population, and its low to moderate level of use.
- The fact that the island feels like a "real community" of people.

2. How do you envision the community in 20 years.

Generally, we'd like to see little or no change. We want to preserve the existing character of the island, with the following changes:

- A safer transportation system for all modes of travel. This means roads built to safety standards and a bike/pedestrian path along the dike.
- Enhanced wildlife resources with improvements to habitat and better connectivity.
- We believe the island may be reaching its carrying capacity, especially on summer and early fall weekends and at the beaches. We do not want to see significant expansion of recreational visitations given the limitations of the island in terms of infrastructure and services. The scale of new development should be in keeping with the existing character of the island.

3. What transportation concerns must be addressed to reach that vision.

We would like Multnomah County to do the following during the next 20 years:

- Bring Sauvie Island, Gillihan, and Reeder Roads up to current safety standards.
- Provide bike/pedestrian paths to reduce conflicts between travel modes.
- Bring dikes up to current safety standards.

- Find a way to limit the number of daily visitors to avoid traffic backups; the number of visitors should not exceed the island's capacity to accommodate them (e.g., parking spaces) or its ability to provide emergency services.

4. What land use concerns must be addressed to reach that vision.

A main concern is that farms engaging in events and activities be commercial farm operations where the production of farm crops remains the primary activity and events are clearly subordinate to and supportive of farming.

- For farm stands, find an effective way to apply and enforce the 25% limitation on sales of retail non-farm items and fee-based promotional events, consistent with state policy to preserve and protect farm land for farm uses.
- Limit large events and even simultaneous smaller events that can adversely impact the island's rural character and charm or overwhelm its infrastructure or carrying capacity.
- Ensure that both individually and cumulatively, events remain incidental to the rural agricultural character of the area and of the farm properties on which they are located; fee-based activities must play a minor role in comparison to the production of farm products on the farms where they occur.
- Revise the code to include standards that are more clearly and objectively stated.
- Avoid vague and ambiguous language in land use approval conditions and provide better code enforcement; vague conditions, a complaint driven approach and voluntary compliance orders are not effective.

5. What are the 3 most important issues for the county to address in the plan?

SICA sees the following as the three most important issues for the county to address:

- Preserving and enhancing the agricultural features and natural resources of the island that give the island its character and make it unique; ensure that agriculture remains a viable use for the farmland.
- Transportation safety for all modes of travel (including farm equipment) and emergency preparedness (through an adequate roadway system).
- Levee maintenance and flood protection.

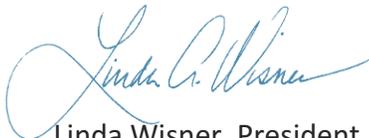
6. Anything else we want to say?

There are several other things we'd like to see in the next 20 years:

- Better cell tower coverage and internet service. Islanders should not be left in the dark ages when it comes to providing this service.
- Improve the quality of Sturgeon Lake and other island water resources.
- Provide a plan that goes beyond being merely "aspirational"; give the plan meaning with real policies that make it a working document.
- Update and improve the zoning code; be more clear and objective in the standards; eliminate ambiguities in code language wherever possible.

Again, we appreciate this opportunity to provide comments and ask that you keep us involved throughout the plan update process. We want to support all efforts that support the health and well-being of our island community.

Best regards,



Linda Wisner, President
Sauvie Island Community Association