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From: [EUGENE MCPHAIL](#)

Sent: Monday, July 13, 2020 4:46:57 PM

To: [Will Hall](#); [Keith Scully](#); [Susan Chang](#); [Doris McConnell](#); kmcglashen@shorelinewa.gov; [Chris Roberts](#); [Betsy Robertson](#)

Cc: [Leif Johansen](#)

Subject: [EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT - 175TH STREET CORRIDOR PROJECT

Sensitivity: Normal

Attachments:

[Shoreline City Council 200711.docx](#) 

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To Mayor Hall, and Members of the Shoreline City Council;

In view of the Shoreline City Hall being Closed today, the Attached letter is submitted in lieu of personal testimony in the public forum of a Shoreline City Council Meeting.

Eugene B. McPhail

13 July 2020

Shoreline City Council
17500 Midvale Avenue North
Shoreline, WA 98133

Re: 175th Street Corridor Project

This is to voice total opposition to any further consideration of a Roundabout at the intersection of North 175th Street and Meridian Avenue North, as publicized in the June 2020 edition of Shoreline *CURRENTS*. My wife and I have owned our home near there since 1966. That is when Interstate 5 had only been open for two years, and was only two lanes wide in each direction from Northgate to Everett. We have observed the majority of traffic revisions in the area since then, but a roundabout at the intersection of North 175th and Meridian is by far the most impractical concept ever. We urge that no further public tax funds be expended on any effort which may give any consideration of a roundabout on Meridian Avenue North at N175th Street.

Roundabouts create the most stressful event in driving, whether small cars or large trucks and busses. Such circular continuous merging into an occupied lane creates the highest probability of fender benders, increasing the likelihood of road rage events. For years I have experienced the traffic at that intersection during the evening peak traffic hours, usually exiting from I-5 South at the N175th Exit, and proceeding west to the left turn lane at Meridian. I have observed countless times that during nearly every light cycle, there have been large articulated Metro busses headed south on Meridian turning left to go eastward on North 175th toward I-5.

That turn is the only one with two lanes turning left side by side, and the lanes are even delineated with a curved dashed line to mark the lane separations. I have observed that during the turn, the rear section of these articulated busses drifts over that dashed line, and the smaller vehicles in the inner turning lane are forced to a stop to avoid a fender bender, or worse, situation. A roundabout at that intersection would significantly worsen the difficulty for Metro busses to negotiate, but would be even more difficult for most of the large trucks. It would also force all traffic traveling east – west on N175th Street to converge into a single lane to enter the roundabout instead of the current three lanes.

I have driven in England, which is filled with roundabouts, some marked in three concentric lanes. I found it considerably more stressful to be in one of those traffic circles than it was to drive on the left side of the road. I compare the configuration of the exits from the Motorway M-4 at Maidenhead, England to those of I-5 and N175th. While the Motorway continued unstopped westward toward Salisbury and Bath, the cross-street had large traffic circles on either side of the Motorway for entering and exiting the Motorway. Installing similar traffic circles in N175th Street on each side of I-5 makes more common sense than any traffic circle at Meridian Avenue North.

There are a number of small traffic circles at intersections on local streets in north Seattle, and those cause more dangerous driving situations than they may have been intended to improve. It's far too dangerous to circle 270 degrees around the circle when there may be any other vehicle in view. Without exception, oncoming vehicle drivers have continued toward me as if I were attempting a left turn right in front of them. At the traffic circle (island) on N192nd Street in Shoreline west of Meridian Avenue, when I have slowed to enter the circle, I have had vehicles speed past me wrong-way on the other side of the circle without any regard for cross street traffic.

Additionally, I have repeatedly encountered that whenever traffic builds up in a roundabout, vehicles waiting to enter the circle always attempt to wedge into the traffic in the circle, attempting the rule that the vehicle to the right has the right-of-way. With the Washington State Patrol currently attempting to promote "zippering" on our highways, more fender-bender congestion is created than solved.

In addition to driving a compact Honda wagon, my wife and I travel in our RAM Megacab, pulling our 30 foot travel trailer, for a total vehicle length of 52 feet. We have traveled in it to Rehoboth, Delaware four times crossing the Chesapeake Bay Bridge, and driving in the Baltimore and District of Columbia beltways, and a roundabout to enter Fort Meade, Maryland. We have also traveled with the trailer to Mount Rushmore, Crater Lake, and Mesa Verde; as well as to San Diego twice through the Los Angeles freeway system. We travel using a specialized "truckers GPS" which is pre-programmed for large truck routes, and lane selection. Installation of roundabouts where GPS units are already programmed otherwise creates confusion. I clearly envision that encountering a roundabout near our home in our truck and trailer would be more difficult and stressful than we have encountered anywhere else to date.

Further, with the high volume of pedestrians using that intersection, from the adjacent public school, as well as the Nazarene Churchyard Park 'N Ride to the Metro bus stops, a roundabout is not feasible with pedestrians, and highly dangerous for cyclists. That intersection is also a critical choke-point for emergency vehicles. Many times I have witnessed emergency vehicles approaching that intersection with lights and sirens, and all traffic stops while the emergency vehicle crosses into the oncoming traffic lane to cross the intersection. Any roundabout would not provide such an emergency pathway.

The environmental concerns are also significant, with such a roundabout extending significantly into the Ronald Bog. Another factor is when Ronald Bog may overflow and flood Meridian North and the southern side of North 175th Street again, as it did in December 2007, any roundabout would not allow for any lane revisions. There were some environmental protections established for Ronald Bog, circa 1970, by the Shoreline School District and King County, when a developer began filling Ronald Bog with intent to build a shopping center.

My wife and I had already owned our home in the Shoreline School District in rural King County for twenty-nine years before the City of Shoreline was incorporated twenty-five years ago. We had voted against the incorporation of the City of Shoreline, in the expectation that adding another layer of government would lead to additional tax burdens. Proceeding any further with any possibility of considering a roundabout at N175th Street and Meridian Avenue North will totally validate our expectation that our tax dollars will be squandered on such a negative value project.

We have always voted Yes for tax levies for the Shoreline School District, the School District in rural King County when we purchased our home. We have already voted No for some of the City of Shoreline projects put to a public vote, but in those cases we did consider that each levy proposal had some positive factors. For us, there are absolutely no acceptable factors involved in any roundabout at this intersection. Even in the event that traffic circles are completed on North 175th Street on each side of I-5, we would still oppose a roundabout on North 175th Street at Meridian Avenue North.

We consider that it is a faulty conclusion that a roundabout at that intersection would serve the needs of the tax-paying Citizens of Shoreline. The vast majority of the rush hour traffic on Meridian Avenue North is caused by commuters using Meridian Avenue as an alternative route to avoid the congestion on Aurora Ave. North and Interstate 5. No business in Shoreline is benefitted by commuters using this residential arterial corridor. It is also totally premature to evaluate the commuter vehicle traffic patterns now, considering that most of those rush hour commuters should be using the Sounder Light Rail line planned to operate within a couple years.

In conclusion, I have previously presented proposals to the Shoreline City Council, and met with members of the Planning Department, regarding meeting the needs of homeless persons in the City of Shoreline and King County. I am still involved in the Host Church efforts serving the needs of the Camp United We Stand homeless encampment. My wife and I are of the strongest opinions that any further tax dollars spent, whether or not subsidized, on such a roundabout will be funds which should have been expended on building more housing for homeless persons in Shoreline, and not wasted to benefit commuters trying to avoid the businesses on Aurora Avenue North.

Eugene B. McPhail
Commander, U.S. Navy (Retired)

Copy to: Leif Johansen, Project Manager