

January 20, 2018

From: Ken DeWitt

To: Ann Hillier, City of Bainbridge Island, Dept. of Planning and Community Development

Re: Miller Rd Shoulder SUR PLN51009

Dear Ms. Hillier:

I'm writing these comments as a neighbor who lives on Tolo Rd. adjacent to the section of the Grand Forest East that will be impacted by the extension of the bicycle lane along the northbound lane of Miller Rd. from Tolo Rd. to Peterson Hill Rd. While I am a member of the Board of Commissioners of the Bainbridge Island Park and Recreation District, my comments are those of a private citizen and should not be considered to represent those of either the Park District in general, nor the views of my fellow commissioners.

As one of the authors of the original Non-Motorized Transportation Plan, I strongly support the northward extension of the bike lane on Miller Rd. I do have a few concerns, though.

First, unless, the City plans to shift the roadway to the east to restore the 1+ ft. reduction of the width of the southbound bicycle lane that occurred the last time the road was chip-sealed and restriped, resulting in the widening of the southbound traffic lane; I have a hard time understanding the need to expand the northbound bike lane to a 6-ft. width. While a wider shoulder would provide additional safety on the uphill section between Battle Point Drive and Tolo Rd., additional width along the relatively level section between Tolo and Koura Rds. Seems to be a bit much.

Second, the northbound shoulder on Miller Rd. has long been used for parking for access to the Grand Forest and its trail system. Widening the pavement by 6 ft. in this area would cause the resulting shoulder to be extremely steep and make roadside parking in that area hazardous to impossible. On any given day, the existing parking lot is at or near capacity, so eliminating parking will create traffic safety hazards as people seek to park in areas that either encroach on the new bike lane or the actual traffic lane itself. If the Park District were to build a new parking lot or expand its existing one, many mature trees inside the forest canopy would have to be removed in an area that the City has deemed to be a Critical Area. In my opinion, a 5-ft wide shoulder would accomplish the City's objectives without triggering negative traffic impacts and environmental issues.

Third, if the northbound bike lane was reduced to a 5-ft. width, it seems that the cost savings would allow it to either be extended further north, maybe as far as Bergman Rd., or extend the existing lane from where it ends at Maxwell Rd. to just past the Miller-Battle Point Rd. intersection. Currently the lane ends at Maxwell Rd., forcing bicycles into the traffic lane immediately prior to the busy intersection. Extending the bike lane to just north of the intersection, but south of the Issei Creek crossing, wouldn't provide a continuous lane, but it would greatly improve safety at the intersection-especially at night and during rainy conditions.

Fourth, reducing the paving to a 5-ft. width would reduce the number of mature trees that would have to be removed within the City's right of way. Granted, some of the trees slated for removal are potentially hazardous, and should be taken down, many of the trees are mature second-growth and appear to be in healthy condition. If there's not a legitimate safety concern, in my opinion, they should be left standing. I do, however, believe that the two mature fir trees standing at the northeast corner of

the Koura-Miller Rd. intersection are safety hazards and should be removed as they block the view of westbound drivers at the Koura Rd. stop sign. In order to get a clear view of southbound traffic on Miller Rd., drivers have to nose out into the northbound traffic lane. This creates a major safety hazard.

I hope that my concerns are clear and I thank you for taking them into consideration. Again, I wish to express my support for the extension of the northbound bicycle lane. It's an important safety improvement along the island's "Core 40" roadways.