From: Nicholas Davies
To: Transportation Commission
Subject: Hill Valley play feedback (86121 / 85415)
Date: Sunday, November 17, 2024 12:18:35 PM

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Dear Transportation Commission,

There's a lot that I appreciate about the submitted plat for the Hill Valley development (between High Point and Pleasant View). Added housing, the including of mixed use parcels, a proposed path network, and some east-west connectivity will all be beneficial. I especially appreciate the inclusion of a multi-use path along High Point Rd, where there is currently a gap in our All Ages & Abilities bike network and a lack of sidewalk. (There is also currently a missing stretch of sidewalk on the Pleasant View side that I don't see addressed in the plat.)

On a more granular level, I question whether all of the neighborhood streets need to all be two-way, and all need to be connected at both ends for automobile traffic.

Most of the streets in the plat do not need to support cut through traffic, and future residents of this neighborhood will be impacted by and resistant to cut through traffic. We have seen this play out over and over again.

Madison's subdivision ordinance discourages cul-de-sacs, but there is a distinction to be made between cul-de-sacs and modal filters. In a cul-de-sac, the end of the street is typically bounded by houses, and reaching the next street over involves a long walk, or a bit of trespassing. Cul-de-sacs are a development pattern we're right to avoid.

However many of the streets shown in this play could be capped at one end--or midblock--with a modal filter to limit automobile traffic while allowing other modes to make the shortest possible connection. Speed humps are good for slowing down thru streets, but are only partially effective at traffic calming, whereas modal filters are much more effective, and at a similar cost.

While modal filters could always be added after the fact, better to include them in the initial "improvements" that the city will accept from the developer upon completion of the project, than to build them later at city expense.

I feel like a lot of development patterns like this plat stem from an indecision about how the streets will be used, rather than a clear vision. Residents coming home by car don't need to be able to approach their home from more than one end of the block. One is plenty!

As a city, we should use this review process to push for a clearer view of modeled traffic flow, and make sure we're not creating problems that will later need to be addressed with more traffic calming features and a chunk of our limited Vision Zero funds.

Thank you,

Nick Davies
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