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**Subject:** Public Comment: Analysis and Recommendation to table Master Transportation Plan dated 3/15/21  
**Date:** Saturday, March 13, 2021 4:25:00 PM

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This plan is NOT a "Master Transportation Plan." It is more of a plan to come up with a plan.

I recommend you table this vote until you have a plan. Is there some need to put out a document labeled as an MTP? If not, why not do the the work that needs to be done to create a plan?

As the document acknowledges in its first section, the City does not have the data it needs to create an MTP. In particular, this version lacks:

- Accurate traffic data: a key recommendation of the document is its call to gather this data
- Accurate census data: it cites 10-year old data that does not reflect the current population (look at how crowded the schools are, and that Ketchum already has over 2900 registered voters).
- Accurate workforce data: there is no relevant or current data in this document on the workforce—where they work/live, and any trends in that.
- Accurate forecasts: there aren't many forecasts of anything. In particular, the City's support for the massive Marriott Hotel at the choke point at the entry to town, the potential for another large hotel across the street from that, the City's push for Bluebird and the consequent potential for up to another 100+ cars in the retail core—all of these will bring more people, more low wage jobs and more cars into core of Ketchum.
- Any reference to a parking plan: how can you have a master transportation plan without a parking plan? When you cut the 2 hour parking to 30 minutes, how will that impact traffic in the core?

This document is riddled with vague terms and has no measurable deliverables or timeframes, no allocation of responsibility, no annual budget requirements (beyond what exists today). This would not be acceptable as a "plan" in any non-municipal context.

If you don't conduct a real planning process for an MTP, this will be another well-intentioned but failed effort for Ketchum, (to wit: City Comprehensive Plan, the Gateway Plan, the Downtown Master Plan, the lack of a plan for community housing, etc., etc.)

You have the opportunity to commission a transportation plan that will achieve the stated goals of safety and quality of life. But first, you need to revisit the Comprehensive Plan and get that right.

Maybe this document can be taken as the "Ghost of Christmas Future." It makes it very clear that if we keep on doing what we are doing (including the recommended projects), according to this document, the goals of safety and quality of life for the residents of Ketchum are guaranteed to degrade significantly over the next 20 years.

Without the context of how and where the City intends to grow, what kinds of jobs it will have, how it will transition from a low-wage tourist town dependent on second home owners for tax revenue to a vibrant town with high wage jobs....until you tackle that, an MTP is a

distraction from what your priority should be—creating a plan to for Ketchum beyond just more tourism and second homes. As both this document and the work that the SVED has done indicate, Ketchum has reached the limits of its tourist economy.

You like to emphasize how you solicit and incorporate community input and how transparent you are. Yet, the only input you have taken from the community for this document are the ADA suggestions, which one would think are legally mandated anyways.

The #1 concern from the community is your plan to shut down 4th Street to automobile traffic. Well, that is in this plan, buried on page 46 as Project F1 (4th Street Evaluation—\$100,000).

Below I go through document in detail to demonstrate its inadequacy. But you have had this document for several drafts, so presuming you have all read it, you must know it isn't up to snuff. Is this really what the Mayor, City Council and Staff considers adequate for an MTP?

You know you have a couple of major intersections that are already hot spots, independent of the big picture:

- The entrance to town when the hotels are finished and the IDOT widens 75 could push a traffic bottleneck well into the middle of the City.
- WSR/Lewis St is forecasted to “fail” (no cars will be able to find a break to make the left hand turn)
- The 75/WSR intersection is a chronic issue—but maybe not as bad as we think per this document
- The City isn't ADA compliant

Deal with these now, and leave the rest until you have a plan based on data and cost/benefit analysis and real planning.

Please don't pass this on the 15th. Please have the Staff do the required work in the proper order and come up with a new Comprehensive Plan and an MTP that are based on data.

Thank you,

Perry Boyle  
Ketchum

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## **1 Purpose**

The background is not accurate. It does not reference the boom in Ketchum real estate development and population growth over the past two years. It leaves the impression that Ketchum is in an economic downturn.

This plan does not do what it says it does—it does not assist anyone in making sound decisions about a transportation system. It has little insight into the future. And it says just that in its listing of current and past land use and transportation system infrastructure. Following anything in this document is like driving a car looking in the rear view mirror.

It is based on the Comprehensive Plan, which we also know to be a contradictory and flawed document that no longer reflects Ketchum and the will of its citizens. To wit, the 3000 signature petition against the Marriott, yet the City waives every zoning regulation for it because it is in the plan. Not very democratic.

This section uses a lot of undefined terms like “balanced” and “integrated” and “range” and “consistent” and “convenient.” These words are useless in forming a plan.

But it then shows its bias for more bus service, more bike routes and some language about “pedestrian circulation” that seems to be a euphemism for shutting down streets to car traffic.

What it doesn't have in this section:

- One single reference to a cost benefit analysis.
- Only one buried reference to a budget
- One single reference to a time line

Goal No. 1 first sub bullet is the most useful part of the entire document. Get the data. You cannot create a “plan” without it. The second sub bullet is also important—what is the 20 year outlook for transport needs for Ketchum? This is where you need an updated Comprehensive Plan first.

## **2 Demographics**

These are just...wrong. And obviously so. The data is 10 years out of date. Why not wait another year when the 2020 census comes out to have some more accurate data? BTW, the sign at the entrance to town has a much higher number than even the 2000 population. The growth rate extrapolation they use has no basis in econometrics. It is a thumb in the air.

Give that it has been stated in Council meetings that workers in Ketchum commute from Jerome and Carey, it might be useful to include those communities in this section.

Most of the data in this section is too out of date to be of use. It does not cite the primary data source for some of its references (e.g., I think a bunch of this came from SVED).

There is no source for the data on Commuting. And without a histogram of commuting times by location and volume, it is not useful for a transportation plan. And it is static with no sense for how the data is trending.

The Disability characteristics are useless, and they have no context for transportation impairments. And none of this is used in coming up with Section 7 projects.

Current Land Use isn't...current. It is from the Comprehensive Plan which is at least 7 years old. It does not reflect zoning waivers and development in the interim period. At least the Zoning Map looks up to date.

## **3 Existing Transportation System**

Street Jurisdiction has not one piece of data in it. Not one figure for road miles owned by the

City or road miles that are private, or paved and un-paved. No context on the City's plans to increase its road miles (or not).

Functional Classification is pretty much seat of the pants. There is no current traffic data that supports most of these.

There is no data to support that Saddle Rd be re-classified.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities are mere statements of what exists, with no data on usage. How do you create a "plan" when there is no data on usage?

In Transit and Intermodal Options there is also no data, Nothing about public transit usage and trends in that. Nothing about airport volumes and trends in that.

Daily Traffic & Traffic Patterns is based on estimated data for "average" daily usage. Why isn't peak data provided and used? Isn't peak traffic the key for choke points? Wouldn't it be critical to understand peak usage versus carrying capacity to determine where long term capital investment might be required?

In Existing Operations, these concepts are used, and clearly indicate that the entrance to town where the Limelight and Best Western are, and where two more hotels are to be built, gets an F (ex 10). And that was from 2 years ago, when usage was lower.

There is nothing in the document that indicates how ITD widening of 75 at the entrance to town will impact traffic flows.

There is nothing in the document that indicates how bringing Ketchum into ADA compliance will impact traffic flows (or what the cost is).

There is nothing in the document that indicates how adding sidewalks and bus stops will impact traffic flows (or what the cost benefits are).

As with Section 2, almost nothing in Section 3 is used to come up with the projects in Section 7.

#### **4 Regional Comprehensive and Transportations Planning**

Right up front they reference the Comprehensive Plan as the guiding document. That "plan" is over 7 years old now and does not reflect reality.

It also references the Downtown Ketchum Master Plan of 2006, which, per the City in its emails to me, is no longer in force, as it was superseded by the Comprehensive Plan. It also notes that a lot of that plan never happened.

It refers to other plans, like that of Mountain Rides, which have expired.

The document is vague as to which transportation recommendations from the various plans it cites have been implemented and which have not. There are no insights as to whether what was implemented had a benefit exceeding its costs.

The key concept is buried here—does Ketchum need a transportation hub, and if so, where?

This document seems to make vague recommendations about car and bike sharing programs—but no details on how much they would cost, who would use them, etc. etc.

And, once again, almost nothing in Section 4 drives the projects in Section 7.

## **5. Future Conditions Evaluation**

This section is a bit of a mess. The charts clearly show that traffic flows started to decline years before the Great Recession that it cites as the cause, and it neglects the clear boom/bust of traffic volumes that are consistent with the boom/bust cycle of a town that lives off of tourism and second home construction activity.

It takes a very simplistic extrapolation of the last 10 years to forecast growth for the next 20 years. And it does it as a point estimate rather than a confidence interval.

It assumes that the City of Ketchum will continue to promote low-wage tourism jobs as its major growth vector.

Figure 13 also indicates that high density residential will not be going into the retail core, which may be a relief to those opposed to Bluebird. Despite Bluebird being in the works for several years, there is no reference to it. Bluebird would create the highest density residential situation in the history of Ketchum, in the center of the retail district, pushing dozens of incremental cars into the parking constrained area as well as contributing dozens of VPDs to the roads and Main Street corridor. Nothing on that in here.

But more interestingly, this plan assumes no additional community housing in Ketchum beyond what has been built to date. Yet this is a major initiative of the Mayor.

Potential Impacts of Future Development seems inadequate. The River Run Transportation Study is over 10 years old. The recommendations in that do not seem consistent with the ITD plans for 75. It is curious that almost none of the recommendations of that plan were implemented. This “plan” recommends that that “plan” be updated. Makes sense.

As this documents mentions, the Ketchum Boutique Hotel Traffic Impact Study was limited in its scope, but recommended a Main Street corridor study—that would be particularly important if another hotel is build at the entrance to town.

All of this renders the Forecast Operations section suspect given how inadequate the current data is.

But even if it is half right, it paints a bleak traffic future for Ketchum. This is why the Comprehensive Plan needs to be updated. Does it really make sense for Ketchum to double down on low wage tourism when the roads are constrained, the airport is constrained and the SVED says that even at hotel capacity prior to Limelight that 85% occupancy degrades the tourist experience?

Maybe this document can be taken as the “Ghost of Christmas Future.” If we keep on doing what we are doing, safety and quality of life for the residents of Ketchum is sure to degrade significantly over the next 20 years. (See table 5).

I think its great that this “plan” calls for a plan for traffic calming, a plan for EV charging, a plan for WSR/Lewis, a plan for WSR/75. Wasn’t this documents supposed to be the Master Plan?

One part of this plan is about to be implemented (5.9). On 3/15 the City Council, in its consent agenda (i.e., no public debate) will vote to acquire spy cameras. Isn’t something of that import worthy of public debate?

This is the only section that seems to drive the projects/spend in Section 7

## **6 Asset Management**

“Keep using iWorQ” isn’t a plan. This section is very light. At the very most basic, it should at least address: What is the value of the asset base? What is its replacement cycle? What is that annual cost?

Nothing in here used to drive the projects/spend of Section 7

## **7 Recommendation**

This section is hard to understand, but I guess this is where we finally find a “plan.” A plan to spend millions of dollars on a variety of projects, few of which are related to any cost/benefit analysis.

Table 8 presents the *current* roadway maintenance cost for the city. If all the recommendations of this section are implemented, how does that number change?

## **8 Funding**

It’s a laundry list of funding sources.  
With zero plan about how to deal with this.  
"Go fish" is not a plan.