

WRITTEN PUBLIC COMMENTS RECEIVED  
PRIOR TO THE  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' SESSION  
ON  
THURSDAY, October 7, 2021  
AT  
10:00 A.M.

Questions, concerns or comments about these items can be directed  
to staff or the Commissioners by contacting the Commissioners' office at

(503) 434-7501

OR

[BOCINFO@co.yamhill.or.us](mailto:BOCINFO@co.yamhill.or.us)

**From:** Rick Olson <rickolson99@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 30, 2021 6:16 PM  
**To:** BOC Info  
**Cc:** Mnmontesano@newsregister.com; jonathan@bikeportland.org;  
mperkowski@capitalpress.com; Lacker@oregonian.com  
**Subject:** Yamhelas Trail

[This email originated outside of Yamhill County]

Dear Commissioner Chair Starrett, Commissioner Kulla, and Commissioner Berschauer.

As a past Commissioner, I urge you to strongly consider the continuance of the Yamhelas Trail Project! After being involved with decisions made regarding the trail and trail financing including grants, I strongly feel that stopping the project would be a mistake and it is unfair for a small group of property owners, leases, and others to determine what the majority of Yamhill County residents want and desire. As LUBA has stated, the trail is not illegal, it has been remanded back to the county for further action much of which would be accomplished through the completion of the Master Plan.

In my mind there is no doubt that the trail is

1. Good for the economy of Yamhill and Carlton who both support the trail.
2. The completion of the Yamhill to Carlton segment of the trail provides a safe corridor for children to go between the two cities.
3. The completion of this segment addresses additional recreation opportunities and impacts the health for those users of the trail.

I respect the two Commissioners for their advocacy for property rights. If that is truly the case, since Yamhill County owns the right away the real questions to ask is what is Yamhill County's rights regarding the property, and what are wishes of the majority of Yamhill County citizens.

If the trail effort is dead, I would strongly suggest that the corridor be fenced and no trespassing allowed. I wonder what the property owners would say when they could not pass over Yamhill County's property to farm the fields that are landlocked without crossing the right away.

Thank You for your consideration and service to Yamhill County. I urge that you consider the above factors and the wishes of the majority of citizens of Yamhill County and not just the adjoining property owners and not leave the citizens with over 2 Million dollars to pay back.

Sincerely,

Rick Olson

**From:** Tom Hammer <tom@tomhammerfarms.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 7, 2021 9:28 AM  
**To:** BOC Info  
**Cc:** mnmontesano@newsregister.com johnathan@bikeportland.org;  
mperkowski@capitalpress.com; lacker@oregonian.com  
**Subject:** Yamhelas-Westsider Trail

[This email originated outside of Yamhill County]

Fm: Tom Hammer

Sent: October 7, 2021

To: BOC info

CC:

[mnmontesano@newsregister.com](mailto:mnmontesano@newsregister.com); [johnathan@bikeportland.org](mailto:johnathan@bikeportland.org); [mperkowski@capitalpress.com](mailto:mperkowski@capitalpress.com);  
[lacker@oregonian.com](mailto:lacker@oregonian.com);

Subject: Yamhelas-

Westsider Trail

I'm writing a response to Commissioner Rick Olson's 9/30/2021 appeal to complete the Yamhelas-Westsider Trail. Rick and I established a cordial first name relationship early in his term. We each had a passion for civics. We bonded over our service in the U.S. Navy and our oaths to honor and serve this country. I appreciated him being responsive and accessible for discussion, for being well informed on matters. We disagreed on the Trail but agreed opposing parties must accept the outcome of land use procedures. Things changed when he went along with purchasing the rail right of way in 10/17. Trail permits had been applied for but were never issued because the County never sought compliance. LUBA remanded the County for that action. In 03/18 Rick did vote to not include the Trail in the TSP until procedure was followed. That procedure would have taken a grant past its expiration date. While the County was in LUBA remand Rick had an ex parte private meeting with then Administrator Laura Tschabold in which she talked him into changing his vote allowing the County to not follow procedure. He subsequently changed his vote 5/31/18 in a working session. It is painful to remind Rick and the BOC that he abdicated his responsibilities to his constituents at that time. LUBA has ruled four more times since, each outcome has protected farmland over a non-conforming recreational use of the land. Rick continues to disrespect those rulings with his call to 'finish the Trail.' It is painful to call him out. Had he remained silent on the matter it wouldn't be necessary to hold him accountable for his actions that ultimately led to the County wasting \$1 million on a bridge, partially constructed, permanently stayed by LUBA in 06/20, now to be completely removed.

The assertion that the Trail would be good for the area economy is made from economic illiteracy. Grant money comes from us all. It is returned after passing through the state and federal bureaucracy at a rate approximating 20 cents on the dollar. When it is used for a non-essential purpose that places a further annual burden for operations on area taxpayers it lessens local GDP. Each tax dollar collected is one not spent by a consumer at greatest efficiency. A book named Economics in One Lesson by Hazlitt may help those who don't understand the basics. For each tax dollar collected and spent inefficiently a consumer dollar is removed from the dynamic local economy. A recreational Trail would lower output from adjacent farms. Revenue in primary industries such as farming multiplies a minimum of three times as it is spent in the local economy. A Trail would lower farm revenues and create a reverse multiplier damaging the local economy. The Trail would have been a permanent economic drag on Yamhill County. Commissioners are the County's economic managers and they must understand this.

Commissioner Olson refers to the Trail as a healthy activity and a safe route to school. It is not a safe route to school. It would have dumped kids onto shoulder less highway 240 one half mile from school. There is no plan in the 24-27 STIP under safe routes to school to facilitate cycling on that stretch of highway. Officials voting to construct the Trail, with input to regional transportation improvements must have overlooked that one. As for healthy activities, there are over 200 safe and scenic bike paths in the state. Kids can play baseball, softball, basketball, football, volleyball, soccer, lacrosse, gymnastics, swim, ski, surf, boat, hunt, fish, golf, play tennis, run cross country, join the track team or just walk. 2.78 miles of bike path, accessible to a handful, won't change healthy opportunities.

Truly,

Tom Hammer,

rural Yamhill county