

## Aaron Panko

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**From:** Molly Douglas <goodgollymissmollykate@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 28, 2021 8:45 PM  
**To:** Aaron Panko  
**Subject:** Comments for Case No. SUB21-09

To Aaron Panko, Planner III,

I am writing in regards to subdivision case No. SUB21-09 at 4540 Pringle Rd SE, Salem, OR 97302. AMANDA Application No.: 21-113071-LD.

The letter I am writing you today is in opposition to the proposed development of 29.68 acres. I have reviewed the proposal and have the following comments (as listed below). I've included as many reputable sources as possible to help state my case (these include links to the CDC, WHO, and The Bureau of Land Management, and more).

I spent 20 of my formative years growing up alongside the farm that is now proposed to be developed. Even now, my parents live alongside this area and I can just imagine the massive amounts of stress they (and the neighbors of this area) will experience with what it takes to develop this amount of land ([source](#)). Once finalized it would no longer be the place I used to call home or a place I would enjoy bringing my own children to, to visit their grandparents.

Below I will state my case for halting this project, and an alternate proposal for the city.

Impact on wildlife and protected species:

The land and wildlife that reside in this unique biosphere contain but are not limited to: deer, hawks, raccoons, opossums, snakes, frogs, countless insects, many species of birds, and owls. Most importantly, the northern spotted owl.

The northern spotted owl is Federally listed under the Endangered Species Act as a threatened species in Washington, Oregon, and California, and State-listed as threatened in California and Oregon, and endangered in Washington ([source](#)). Habitat is essential and critical for the continued population of this species. To remove the old-growth habitat that this owl calls home would endanger this owl's chances of survival.

For this reason alone, the project should be entirely abandoned by the City of Salem as this not only endangers the Northern Spotted Owl but Oregon's space within the wildlife preservation community.

Environmental impacts:

The carbon footprint of adding 138 single-family lots would add to the increase of global warming. As mentioned above it would contribute to the rapidly decreasing plant, animal, and microorganism biospheres of Salem, Oregon.

For example, concrete is one of the most destructive materials on earth ([source](#)) and should be avoided at all costs. Those 138 single-family lots would add a *significant* amount of concrete.

Indigenous land:

The land that this subdivision is being proposed on is land that originally belonged to the following local nations ([source](#)):

- Kalapuya
- Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians
- Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde
- Santiam

In an effort to repair and strengthen our relationships with these local tribes I would ask if they have been consulted on the use of this land. And if they have not, I would request that they are ([source](#)).

Traffic and safety:

It has been well documented (both by local residents, and otherwise) that the areas surrounding the acreage proposed for this subdivision have become increasingly more congested over the last 20 years. I experienced this first-hand, witnessing traffic and pedestrian accidents (specifically near the intersection of Hilfiker and Commercial, and 12th street/Hilfiker).

With the addition of 138 single-family dwellings, that area could see up to 276 cars (possibly more) added to the number of traffic surrounding the area. I do not believe the plans adequately account for this significant and irreversible increase in traffic.

Proposal

My proposal would instead be to utilize this land for the people of the City of Salem. I believe that the land would be much better utilized as a community space. This would help the health of the community, as well as the plants and animals that call this area their home.

Salem could absolutely use more space for kids, and teens. This land could be utilized as a space for biking/walking trails, a community garden, and a park. Having an area like this in the heart of the city would be phenomenal to the health of the city and its residents ([source](#)). In fact, there are many studies on the health benefits of parks within city limits ([source](#)).

It would be a devastating loss to Salem to see this area utilized for yet another subdivision instead of being repurposed as a green space.

According to the World Health Organization: "Modern urban life style is associated with chronic stress, insufficient physical activity and exposure to anthropogenic environmental hazards. Urban green spaces, such as parks, playgrounds, and residential greenery, can promote mental and physical health, and reduce morbidity and mortality in urban residents by providing psychological relaxation and stress alleviation, stimulating social cohesion, supporting physical activity, and reducing exposure to air pollutants, noise and excessive heat." ([Source](#))

Additionally, adding a green space would enable more jobs for the City of Salem ([source](#)). This would add longer-term economic benefits rather than the short-term benefits of building crews and site maintenance workers who will only remain for the next 1-2 years.

I would ask that you strongly consider my above comments, and what a new green space would mean to the city. It would be heartbreaking to see this area turn into another subdivision when there's so much more that could be done to help support the city of Salem.

Thank you for your time, and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Molly Douglas