

Nick,

I've sat down to write this email several times now and I keep finding myself having a hard time balancing my personal stance versus my Fire Department stance. I figured that since I'm the only Volunteer Department Head for the city and my livelihood doesn't depend on keeping my position I will give you my honest statement of the situation to relay to the Council.

My stance is that removing the stop sign from the intersection at 1st Street and Russell is a mistake. I base this opinion on a few things. The first and most important thing is I've actually went and looked at the intersection. The sight distance when approaching 1st Street on Russell from the south is grossly inadequate for an uncontrolled intersection. Granted this is my uneducated opinion as I am not a traffic engineer but it only takes common sense to see that this is an issue. The sight distance is an issue looking west and more so looking east. There are no setbacks other than the width of the sidewalks on the south side of 1st Street at that intersection. I feel with the type of traffic that will be entering 1st street from the Port and waterfront that there will be serious accidents happening at the intersection.

My second concern is there hasn't been any traffic volume data available that shows a flow change after the addition of the truck route signs. I've spoken to Eric and he told me that he wanted to see the data after the busy season. I assume that he may have some data to share at the meeting this week but as of right now I haven't heard of anything being available. Being in the Manufacturing Engineering field I base a lot of my decisions on data. It's a really good tool to have. So far I feel decisions have been made with emotion instead of hard data.

From a fire department standpoint, we witness high speed traffic already on 1st Street at our Monday night meetings and when trying to exit the station and while returning to the station for fire calls. There are vehicles that exhibit rapid acceleration heading east with a stop sign already in place. Removal of the stop sign will only increase the danger to our volunteers. I know that one of the arguments is that the fire station is slated to move from 1st Street but my counter to that is that a time frame hasn't been set for that to happen.

I'm not the type of person to just complain about stuff without a solution proposal though so here are some of my ideas.

- Install solar radar speeds signs on 1st Street. With lack of enforcement being an issue the speed signs do seem to work on 2nd Street now and would address some concerns about speeding that has been voiced by the residents of 1st Street.
- Focus on providing off-street parking within the city. There are two lots on each end of town that could be leased and opened as parking to relieve some of the congestion on 2nd Street.
- Eliminate the north side 2nd Street parking from Columbia to Russell streets during certain parts of the day. This would have to coincide with opening off-street parking. Parking is a huge issue already during peak times on 2nd Street. I do not see this improving especially with the proposed projects for the Courthouse lawn.

- Move Saturday Market off 2nd Street. I think this is self-explanatory if you have actually been to Saturday Market. The vendors have a habit of parking right in front of the event and it increases foot traffic.
- Lastly WSP and Skamania County Sheriff's office need to do focused enforcement. There needs to be a message sent out to the semi-trucks that speeding will not be tolerated. The speed is strictly enforced while traveling through Bingen on SR14 so enforcement does work

I hope this makes it to the Council. I do not plan on making a public statement at the meeting on the 20th so this will need to be considered my official statement both as Fire Chief and as a resident of Stevenson.

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Regards,

Rob Farris, Fire Chief
Stevenson Fire Department/SCFD 2

Hello Nick,

I am unable to attend the 10/20 meeting and would like these comments made a part of the record.

I urge city staff and city council to leave the stop signs in place due to potential grave danger and encourage city staff and city council to increase the activity with regard to the real issue at hand which is keeping Oregon trucks in Oregon by working legislatively to even out the WA and OR gas/mileage taxes.

Thank you,

Monica Masco

DATE: October 17, 2016
TO: Stevenson City Council
FROM: Kristi Versari
SUBJECT: Removal of Stop Signs on 1st Street at Russell

I appreciate the Council's decision to reconsider the removal of the east/west stop signs on 1st Street at Russell resulting from concerns that I and others raised at the June 16th City Council meeting.

I continue to have grave concerns over the safety of this critical Stevenson intersection should you proceed with the stop sign removal. As I expressed at the previous meeting, there are significant sight distance limitations, in particular heading north on Russell beyond the railroad tracks. Not only does this increase the likelihood of vehicle and truck accidents but also the potential for vehicles to be stranded on the railroad tracks when traffic is backed up on Russell waiting to turn onto 1st street. The all-way stop is also critical to ensure safe pedestrian crossings to and from the waterfront and in support of the Comprehensive Plan Goals to connect downtown Stevenson to the waterfront.

According to the Federal Highway Administration, multi-way stops reduce accidents in cities with intersection sight distance problems and at intersections with parked cars that restrict sight distance.

The Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) provides the following guidance on other criteria to be considered in an engineering study on 4-way stop intersections:

- The need to control left-turn conflicts;
- The need to control vehicle/pedestrian conflicts near locations that generate high pedestrian volumes;
- Locations where a road user, after stopping, cannot see conflicting traffic and is not able to reasonably safely negotiate the intersection unless cross traffic is also required to stop; and
- An intersection of two residential neighborhood collector (through) streets of similar design and operating characteristics where multi-way stop control would improve traffic operational characteristics of the intersection.

I believe that the intersection of 1st Street and Russell meets all four of the above criteria. This is the reason that Stevenson has had a safe 4-way stop at this intersection for years. I urge the City Council to keep the all-way stop signs. They are critical to maintaining safe, orderly, and timely traffic flow for vehicle and pedestrian crossings to and from the waterfront and across the railroad tracks. They are needed for vehicle and truck speed control on 1st street. They are also necessary to meet the long established City goal of improving the connection of downtown to its waterfront.