

**City of Westfir Mayor & Council
City of Westfir Planning Commission
Westfir City Hall
47441 Westoak Rd.
Westfir, OR 97492**

November 22, 2021

RE: TransCascadia & Crows Feet Commons Proposals

Dear esteemed Mayor, Council, and members of the Planning Commission for the City of Westfir,

I am writing in support of the recently submitted proposal(s) via TransCascadia and Crow's Feet Commons to develop the site in the corner properties at Westoak and N. Fork Roads, in Westfir.

Nick Gibson (TransCascadia) has already proven to be an excellent partner in attracting viable tourism business to the Westfir-Oakridge community, while also serving to help sustain local trail resources as a contributor to the local Alpine Trail Crew Assn. through both financial and volunteer contributions. I believe Nick's intention in bringing these proposals "to the table", so to speak, speaks volumes about his intentions for the community, both as a professional, and personal investment.

These proposals, combined, could potentially benefit the greater Westfir-Oakridge areas in many ways;

- 1) The most obvious benefit is the positive economic impact; by attracting new clients to the area, while widening opportunities for families to recreate by offering a more affordable lodging option close-in to services such as restaurants, groceries and other specialty retail located throughout Westfir-Oakridge. This proposal supports multi-day stays for people who many not have the means to pay for an AirBnB or hotel room, and offers an equitable experience for these visitors, providing a greater potential for them (and others) to explore the community and spend money elsewhere, and not just on lodging.
- 2) New business means additional tax base. Both Oakridge and Westfir have reached an extremely critical point in having enough resources to adequately fund emergency medical, law enforcement and fire services. This proposal offers Westfir an opportunity to capitalize on additional tax revenues to help support more adequate funding for these services.
- 3) For better or worse, the communities of Westfir-Oakridge are largely dependent on a tourism economy. By incorporating new businesses (such as these) to the area that serve to buoy this industry, our community is potentially increasing the tax base to support added infrastructure necessary to attract other industries to the area.
- 4) There is a recent request surfacing, originating from the 5 Rivers Group (a citizen-led volunteer river cleanup organization) for support from both cities of Oakridge and Westfir to help advocate against dispersed camping opportunities within close proximity of Westfir and Oakridge city limits, in order to mitigate the rising costs associated with a growing problem of drug use, property crime, and sanitation issues. Oakridge has already voted to support this proposal. If Westfir supports this proposal and the Forest Service agrees, there is going to be a greater need to provide appropriate and adequate camping areas for visitors.

- 5) Even if the Forest Service is unable to address the dispersed camping issue, it is a well-known fact that attracting positive recreational uses to an area potentially serves as a deterrent for other “less desirable behaviors” to occur.
- 6) These projects are occurring in “stages” – which gives time for both developers and the community to work together to resolve concerns, and learn from Stage 1 to improve the development process moving forward into Stage 2.
- 7) Lastly, having an organic grocery store in town would be a terrific amenity, even if it were only open seasonally! Westfir-Oakridge needs more healthy food options!

Our communities deserve quality investment! I strongly recommend the City of Westfir move forward to support and explore the positive opportunities and new possibilities these developments would potentially bring to our area.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michelle Emmons McPharlin'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent 'M' and 'E'.

Michelle Emmons McPharlin
Local Homesteader, AirBnB Business Owner, and Trail Steward
High Prairie Mountain House
76707 High Prairie Rd.
Oakridge, OR 97463