



ST. LOUIS BOMBERS RUGBY CLUB

ESTABLISHED 1962 - A 501(C)3 CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION

Mr. Eric Sterman, City Administrator
Mr. Bryson Baker, P.E.

Re: Traffic Impact Study
St. Louis Bombers Rugby Park

Dear Messrs. Sterman and Baker,

We were dismayed at the discussion at the City Council hearing of May 12, 2020, regarding the Traffic Impact Study ("Study") performed for the St. Louis Bombers Rugby Park. The concerns are at least twofold: The Study is flawed in some respects, and delay denies the St. Louis Bombers the use of the park as promised and agreed to under the terms of the Lease.

The minutes from the City Council meeting when the Study was made a requirement, stated, " a traffic study has to be completed by the City at the petitioners expense and has to *show no significant increase and that a service level D or better is maintained between Gravois and Weber Hill Road,...*". As you well know the usage of the park had been athletic fields and a golf course. There is no data or content taking into account the impact of the athletic fields and a golf course on traffic, and how this might compare to the rugby usage. There is nothing in the Study, in any form or context, where the condition of "show[ing] no significant increase" is being considered or measured. The Study is absolutely silent on the matter. Indeed, the Study admits its limited account of only "existing travel patterns, current roadway network, and proximity to similar uses."

The requirement of a "show[ing] no significant increase" is bolstered by the discussion that took place at the hearing. Aldermen and citizens alike offered their opinion that the athletic fields and golf course traffic would far exceed rugby traffic. It was noted that "hundreds" of golfers participated in weekend tournaments. Any sensible conclusion is that the Study should take into account the current traffic caused by the athletic fields and a golf course usage in order to assess any "significant increase".

It is also apparent some of the data inputted into the Study is in question. Table 1 shows that during the weekday pm peak hour 50 vehicles go into the park, but only 35 exit. Fifteen vehicles enter from north W. Watson Road and 35 enter from Route 30. Then ten vehicles exit going south on W. Watson Road and 25 head north. What happened to the other 15 vehicles? It could very well be in the transmission of information that an error was made or some average was used, and that's forgivable but nonetheless the Study should be corrected to show 35

vehicles. Similarly, the total traffic then going in and out allegedly during the weekday pm peak hour is 70 vehicles and not 85, which points to another discrepancy.

The weekday pm hour is defined as 4:15pm-5:15 pm. It is suggested that under the worst-case scenario exiting traffic from one practice or match occurs at the same time as traffic is entering for the next practice or match. Even under the “worst-case scenario” that’s not true. It is a false assumption. High school rugby is leaving at or no later than 5:15 pm on Tuesday and Thursday. High school rugby practices and match traffic on these days enter the park well before the weekday pm peak hour, and on average 12-20 vehicles exit at the peak hour. (There may be more vehicular traffic on match days which would occur two to three times per year, a negligible impact).

The weekday traffic for men’s rugby occurs on Tuesday and Thursdays as well, but from 6:00 pm-8:00 pm. Men’s rugby traffic is entering at approximately 5:45 pm (after the weekday pm hour) and certainly not at the same time as high school rugby traffic is vacating the premises-and that’s intentional. The Study assumes traffic leaving at 5:15 pm coincides with traffic entering at 5:45 pm, and that’s wrong. Taking into account both high school and men’s rugby traffic, none is entering during the weekday peak hour and but a handful of vehicles are leaving at or after the peak hour. Table 1 shows 50 vehicles entering the park during the weekday pm hour but in fact, it’s none. And perhaps 12-20 vehicles are leaving the park before or about 5:15 pm, and not 35 vehicles.

Table 1 shows 125 vehicles out during the Saturday midday peak hour--defined as 12:00 pm-1:00 pm. There are zero vehicles leaving during this hour. Thus, the conclusion of “150” new trips is flat wrong (the math is wrong as well: $125 + 125 = 250$, not 150), and consequently so is the alleged impact of traffic impacting southbound W. Watson traffic during the Saturday midday peak hour as shown at Table 3. Notably, youth rugby occurs Saturday mornings well before Saturday midday peak hour, and Saturday afternoon usage occurs approximately 12-14 times annually, neither of which has any material bearing on traffic.

Thus, Table 1’s conclusions there are 85 new trips during the weekday pm peak hour and 250 new trips during the Saturday midday peak hour, are grossly in error. Its more correct to say 12-20 vehicles leave at or about 5:15 pm, and only 35-40 vehicles enter the park during the Saturday midday peak hour. Given the unreliability of Table 1 values, Table 3 values are also suspect.

As noted above the minutes reflect that the Study examines whether a “service level D or better is maintained between Gravois and Weber Hill Road.” The problem remains is the Eastbound Gravois Road Left-Turn and Southbound West Watson Road approaches under Exiting Conditions were already at LOS of E and F, respectively. Meaning the City had set a standard that could not be met. This, of course, has its own ramifications, but fairness and equity demand the service Level D standard be set aside.

Even accepting the questionable values in Table 3, the changes in the LOS values are minimal at best. The Study admits, “under the 2020 Build Unrestricted conditions, significant conditions are not expected at the study intersections.” For example, during the weekday pm hour scenario, the Eastbound Gravois Road Left-Turn changes under the Existing condition changes from (49.0) to (56.5), and (57.5) under the 2020 Build Unrestricted and 2020 Build-Restricted conditions, respectively. Similarly, during the Saturday midday peak hour, the Eastbound Gravois Road Left-Turn changes under the Existing condition from (14.9) to (16.5)

and (16.8) under the 2020 Build Unrestricted and 2020 Build- Restricted conditions, respectively. Here, the Study characterizes the delay as small-less than 5 seconds-and that operations continue to be acceptable on Saturday.

There are many other issues and problems with the Study. We have not attempted to identify them all. Suffice to say its unreliable. And we recognize the Study only intends to present the worst-case scenario, not what the traveling public would expect on a day in a day out basis. The Study concedes, "*It should be noted that many weeknights and most weekends may not have any activity at the proposed park.*", and that's true. It also assumed that rugby traffic "could overlap" and as we have shown that's not likely. The Study concludes, "much of the rugby traffic will occur during off-peak times and will not have a significant impact on the surrounding roadway system, if left unrestricted." Thus, even if the traffic caused by the athletic fields and golf course is overlooked, the condition of "show[ing] no significant increase" has been squarely met.

We also offer though no need has been shown, a minor adjustment can be made to high school practice or their match schedules to avoid leaving prior to the end of the weekday peak hour. But it would seem the City would want to accommodate the Lindbergh high school parents and high school drivers and leave the practice and match times in place, given how few vehicles are in play.

In short, the Bombers have timely complied with all City requirements, some of which are outside the terms of the Lease such as this Study. It's now time to move forward unobstructed in our efforts to put in place a rugby park that has been promised long ago.

Sincerely,

Ron Laszewski
St. Louis Bombers Rugby Club, Inc