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Re: Follow-up To Public Hearing Testimony
YMCA Mineral Lake Rezone Application
Application No. RZ20-00002

Dear Ms. Brooks and Ms. Napier:

We welcome the opportunities that have been provided for the YMCA of Greater Seattle ("YMCA" or the "Y") to share information relevant to the camp and outdoor education facility we are proposing for the land we own at Mineral Lake.

We believe that the information we have provided to date not only meets but also goes beyond, what is required of an applicant for a non-project, rezone request such as the one currently before the Board of County Commissioners. We would like to offer additional comments regarding an important issue raised in the public hearing on February 14: public safety and emergency services.

As staff correctly pointed out to the commissioners during that session, determining the adequacy of emergency services is a project-level issue that will need to be resolved to the county's satisfaction before a binding site plan or building permits are issued. Both the staff and the Planning Commission have noted this determination cannot be made until the project details are available and analyzed, a step that is dependent on approval of the proposed Master Plan Resort overlay.

The County's thorough SEPA review process addressed this very issue in detail. Condition 6 of the Mitigated Determination of Non-Significance (MDNS) requires the YMCA to provide transportation improvements to meet fire and safety access requirements, including upgraded primary access and the addition of a secondary access point. Condition 7 requires the YMCA to demonstrate that adequate emergency services will be provided. These and all other MDNS conditions will have to be met in order for the project to move forward. County review does not end with this rezone application; indeed, more intensive review will occur at the project permitting stage.

We can, however, offer additional insight to the commissioners regarding public safety during the hearing. The YMCA appreciates emergency providers' comments on the challenges and constraints they face in serving rural areas of Lewis County, including the Mineral area. However, it was clear from the testimony provided that these are pre-existing conditions rather than new conditions that would be created as a result of the Master Plan Resort proposal. Emergency services (including hospital beds, fire response times, and public safety coverage) are already limited in this part of the County, due to its rural nature and the distances between small communities.

As correctly pointed out during the hearing, an applicant like the Y is not responsible or required to correct preexisting conditions that are deficient. The relevant issue is what additional demand the applicant's proposal (as determined at the project review phase) will place on these services, and what steps the applicant will be required to take or what funding it must provide to ensure that this incremental demand can be met.

Even though this is a topic for future review, it may be helpful to provide some context at this time regarding the additional demand on public services that could be created by a Y camp at Mineral Lake. Our two existing camps, Camp Orkila on Orcas Island and Camp Colman on the Key Peninsula, both of which are also located in rural areas, have had a combined total of nine law enforcement calls over the past two years, with five of those calls being related to a single situation. In other words, our camps typically place very little demand on law enforcement services. We have no basis to challenge Sheriff Snaza's assertion that hiring enough deputies to cover rural Lewis County to the extent he would prefer carries a price tag of \$750,000 or more. However, our data clearly demonstrate that the Y will not be the driving factor in the level of coverage needed. It might also be informative to review how often law enforcement has been called out to similar youth camp facilities that already exist in the county.

The YMCA has an established history of productively partnering with emergency service providers – including both law enforcement and fire departments – in rural areas, and this camp will be no different. We are committed to working closely with county staff and local law enforcement and emergency response providers, and we remain confident that this issue can and will be thoroughly addressed at the project stage as required by the MDNS determination in the County's SEPA review.

We remain committed to working with the county and the community in the months and years ahead. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Gwen Bagley

Gwen Ichinose Bagley
Senior Vice President and Youth Development Officer
YMCA of Greater Seattle