

May 20, 2020  
Teton County Board of County Commissioners



**RE: Please put the Tribal Trail project on hold**

Dear Madam Chair Macker and Commissioners,

Thank you for the extensive time and detailed considerations each of you has made into determining next year's budget given the COVID-19 funding crisis. We last wrote to you expressing our support for fully funding a neighborhood plan for northern South Park, *if you believe now is the time to consider development there*. In contrast, **please put the Tribal Trail road on the back burner and do not fund it now.**

Road building is a costly process, whether in staff time, consultant services, stakeholder facilitation, or construction. The cost to the county alone was last budgeted at \$2.4-\$3.2 million, and the entire project could reach \$8-17M. Of course, you have not yet made a decision on whether or not to build the Tribal Trail road, let alone decided on the design that would determine final costs – so these numbers are rough guesses.

This discussion has long been controversial. We find it extremely significant that most of the stakeholder group asked that the process be halted – and that their request was not honored. A controversial proposal like this places a real burden on our community members to engage meaningfully during an ongoing public health crisis. And it adds a cost to your own decision-making bandwidth when you clearly have higher priorities.

Right now, and in the coming year, our community and our elected leaders should be most focused on core government services that provide for human health – whether that's public health, human services, water quality planning and management, responsible planning, or conservation. These last few months have repeatedly demonstrated the fundamental value of these services for our mental and physical health. Ultimately, we have to ask ourselves, where can this money, whether several thousand for facilitation or many million for a road, be put to better use?

**Please focus your limited budget and limited time on more-important, less-controversial projects, and put the unnecessary Tribal Trail project on hold for at least a year or indefinitely.**

Sincerely,

Brooke Sausser  
Community Planning Manager