

ERS not worth troubles it will bring

Please hear me, Eagle-area people. I feel as though we're trying to push a two-legged elephant up a hill, but this is no time to quit. Nor is it time for people to throw up their hands and say nothing about the future of our town.

In the next two or three months, Eagle will either continue to be the town we recognize or turn the corner toward urban anonymity. Maybe that sounds a bit overstated, but then take a look at what is steamrolling into our future while no one seems to be looking.

I know there are people who would welcome more shopping in Eagle. I just wonder if they understand or consider what is attached to the Eagle River Station big-box experience, and is it worth the price tag?

Try to visualize a retainer wall 30 feet from I-70.

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It will attempt to soften the effect of four-story buildings where we now see hayfields, but travelers from the east will just see Fort Eagle as their first impression of our town.

So who cares what travelers think of us? We should. Do they want to get off the interstate and come to the heart of Eagle (Broadway), or do they just go to Applebee's and leave. But wait. Applebee's is an assumption, as is the rest of the commercial components of this touted revenue savior. We haven't a clue what stores would be out there and neither do the developers. Target was a rumor last time around, and this time, it isn't even on the table.

They simply want big-box retail (to be determined after approval) and never mind who that might be. They are actually now mentioning more pricey, upscale retail that bears no relevance to our mountain town.

And they have brought 550 residential rental units into the mix. The developer has tried to convince our Town Board those units will have no significant affect on our schools, post office or traffic, as there would be a magic ramp to I-70. However, that interchange will only be functional just prior to retail stores opening their doors, so how do the projected 760 construction workers get to

work on any given work day? You've guessed it — Chambers and Highway 6. This is such an affront to the residents of the Eagle area, who, by the way, have no assurance they will be among those workers. The town's response is "with growth comes growing pains."

And then here comes steamroller No. 2. Haymeadow is patiently biding its time on this town's busy agenda. There is a proposal for around 1,000 new residences on Brush Creek. Somehow in the convoluted thinking of money-seeking America, they balance and justify each other.

But if we build it, will they come? Where are these thousands of people going to come from? Where will they work? In construction? We're painfully aware of just how short-lived that bubble can be. We are in a horrid housing market, so is the answer further saturation?

You'll have to ask our leaders at Town Hall for the answers to that because both of these proposals appear to be on a fast track to their approval. But Eagle can survive with a better plan at our eastern gateway. We've been predicted to be a town full of tumbleweeds before, but we can get through this without selling our soul. A final thought: Recently at 8 a.m., there was total gridlock of Highway 6 traffic from a quarter of a mile west of Sylvan

Lake roundabout to I-70, and commuters were faced with about a half hour to make that trip.

Eagle is now a town with a population of about 6,500, but I doubt there are numbers to show exactly how many live in the vicinity who use Highway 6 through town. Upper Kaibab is outside of town (which also means they can't vote), and everyone on Brush Creek, Salt Creek, Bruce Creek, Frost Creek, even some Gypsum residents are in the same category, but we all affect the traffic in town.

Studies have indicated that traffic currently moves at a D or F level of service at peak times of the day. What is an east Eagle interchange within a shopping mall going to do to help people move through town, along with a few thousand new neighbors?

Save yourself the brain pain of Town Hall. Just write your thoughts to the planning department at the town of Eagle and send to tomboni@townofeagle.org. Your opinion must be counted, noted, and entered into record just as if you sat in a meeting for several hours.

Three years ago, over 100 people who cared about Eagle's future packed Town Hall and voted overwhelmingly for preservation of Eagle as we know it. Are you still out there? Just write.

Rosie Shearwood Brush Creek

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