

BACHTOLD ANNEXATION UPDATE

*Hayden Homes files development application with City
Public comment period now through August 12*

Table Rock HOA
July 17, 2019

Quote of the day

“Should the City go through with this plan it will PROFOUNDLY affect the south side of Walla Walla,” says Jonathan Bruhn, president of the Table Rock HOA. “It will be the equivalent of putting a city the size of Waitsburg (population 1,195, without the charm that city has) on the south end of Walla Walla.”

Overview

The City of Walla Walla gave notice on July 15, 2019, that Hayden Homes has officially filed an application to develop the Bachtold property (the field surrounding Table Rock).

The proposal is a development agreement in conjunction with an annexation request. The development proposal is to subdivide approximately 104 acres into 372 single-family residential lots with associated roads, drainage facilities and open space.

Documents

The following documents are available online from the City of Walla Walla:

- [Notice of Application](https://wallawallawa.gov/Home/ShowDocument?id=3046) (https://wallawallawa.gov/Home/ShowDocument?id=3046)
Dated July 15, 2019, this document gives notice of Hayden Homes application/proposal for annexation and development of the Bachtold property.
- [Application](https://wallawallawa.gov/Home/ShowDocument?id=3042) (https://wallawallawa.gov/Home/ShowDocument?id=3042)
The development agreement application.
- [SEPA Checklist](https://wallawallawa.gov/Home/ShowDocument?id=3050) (https://wallawallawa.gov/Home/ShowDocument?id=3050)
Environmental impact checklist.

- [Draft Plat Map](https://wallawallawa.gov/Home/ShowDocument?id=3048) (https://wallawallawa.gov/Home/ShowDocument?id=3048)
Proposed plat map of the development.
- [Traffic Impact Analysis](https://wallawallawa.gov/Home/ShowDocument?id=3052) (https://wallawallawa.gov/Home/ShowDocument?id=3052)
Study of traffic around the proposed development.
- [Geotech Report](https://wallawallawa.gov/Home/ShowDocument?id=3040) (https://wallawallawa.gov/Home/ShowDocument?id=3040)
A study of drainage and related issues.
- [Exhibits](https://wallawallawa.gov/Home/ShowDocument?id=3044) (https://wallawallawa.gov/Home/ShowDocument?id=3044)
Open space, grading, and water and sewer plan.

Public comment period

The notice from the City opens the public comment period. Comments to City staff about the proposal must be submitted in writing. Mail or deliver to:

City of Walla Walla
Development Services Department
55 E. Moore St.
Walla Walla 99362

The public comment period ends August 12, 2019, at 5 p.m.

After August 12, City staff will review the comments, consider amending the plan, and then recommend whether the City Council should approve the plan. The plan would then become an agenda item up for vote by the City Council. If they approve the development plan they also approve the annexation.

The importance of the public comment period cannot be overstated. Now is the time to make your voice heard.

Issues

The Table Rock HOA board and neighbors in the surrounding area have identified at least four issues of significant concern:

1. **Traffic.** There will be a substantial increase in traffic but with no upgrade to surrounding roads. According to the [traffic study](https://wallawallawa.gov/Home/ShowDocument?id=3052), this increase will happen even if the development isn't approved.
(https://wallawallawa.gov/Home/ShowDocument?id=3052)

This development plan severely restricts parking around the two schools in the area. While picking up children, parents will no longer be able to park within 300 feet (length of a football field) of the intersections. This distance would allow placement of left-turn lanes.

Level of Service (LOS), which measures ease of transit through the intersections, is already bad during school arrival and dismissal times. It would not improve. LOS F is the worst level, and the Hayden traffic study shows that by 2025 the LOS at some of these intersections would be at LOS E. Current LOS levels are C. While code does permit traffic to worsen by up to two levels, is LOS E acceptable when considering children's safety?

The plan makes no mention of egress from Fire Station 41. How will increased traffic affect response times for emergency vehicles or how quickly people can respond to the station? Will it require marking a no-vehicle area in front of the fire station? If so, traffic will back up even further and become more congested.

The plan says Cottonwood Road should be widened but makes no provision for this. How does the plan make it safer for pedestrians and cyclists? There's no plan for sidewalks through the Cottonwood cut. Hopefully there would be a bike lane, but that's not a given. Will the road become even more hazardous for these two user groups?

The plan doesn't appear to fix the blind corner at Russell Creek on Cottonwood. Last year, the City engineer stated in a memo that any developer must widen the road at Russell Creek to 18 feet from the center line and include sidewalks and bike lanes. This would require fixing the bridge. Right now, the plan just states that there is adequate room for people to get by. This isn't acceptable.

If transit is to be supplied, will bus turnouts be built so traffic can continue to move while the bus picks up passengers?

We encourage everyone to read the traffic study carefully and draw your own conclusions as you prepare your comments for the City.

2. **Drainage and soil issues.** Is the plan adequate to handle a 100-year flood? There will be immense liabilities to the City if this plan can't handle a 100-year flood.

The [proposed drainage plan](#) says to expect a 35 percent to 45 percent impervious surface area. How was this calculated?

(<https://wallawallawa.gov/Home/ShowDocument?id=3040>)

How will the City maintain all the infrastructure needed for this project when there's been a challenge in maintaining the existing infrastructure per the 2016 Aspect Engineering Report?

How is drainage handled on the east side as it's mandated that all storm water generated by the development be retained on site?

Is the sedimentation pond adequate, and what about sediment on the east side of the field?

How will standing water after a storm be treated for mosquitos? What about the threat of West Nile Virus, which has been found in the Tri-Cities area. What are the costs of mosquito control for this extra standing water?

What plans are there to help control storm water after harvest when there's an increase in the cubic feet per second runoff because there's not a crop? What danger does this pose? This is a significant question because the development will proceed in phases. Also, what's the plan for controlling noxious weeds? Farmers work hard to prevent these, and what will Hayden's responsibility be? What is the contingency plan for this?

What are the possible ecological dangers to the creeks in the area? They are critical habitat areas, and salmon and steelhead streams. The sediment pond north of the Boulders subdivision is already half full of sediment from the April 2019 storms. Who dredges and maintains this? What happens to the overflow should the pond fail? What are the City's liabilities if the pond fails and excess sediment flows into streams? Are there ecological as well as financial penalties?

What are the long-term costs to maintain the storm water system? It

appears that there will be large drainage swells and catch basins in the development. Is Hayden paying for the mowing down of weeds and ensuring that the dry wells stay open and clear, or will this become the City's responsibility? Will this mean an increase in taxes just for maintenance?

We hope to soon hear from the geotech engineer hired by Table Rock HOA to advise us on this matter. He may have more information to share. In the meantime, please review the drainage plan and let the City know of your concerns.

3. **Economics.** Will this decrease the value of my home and property taxes? If so, how does the City hope to pay for this?

What costs will the City incur both short-term and long-term?

What additional improvements to infrastructure will be needed long-term? More schools, additional fire stations, police stations, and related staff?

Can our current medical system handle the influx equivalent to the population of Waitsburg on 104 acres? Is there a plan in place with providers to increase the number of hospital beds, recruit medical staff, etc.?

Will the streets in the development be planned to handle school buses? Prospect Point is full this year.

If the City loses 15 cents on every dollar invested in residential development, how does this development make sense for a city that can't even buy a new ambulance for its own fire department?

Will we need more snow removal equipment?

Will this many new residences lower the water pressure on the south side? Will there be enough water pressure to put out a fire? What is the city's plan for this? A water tower and pumping station? Who pays for this? Utility taxes are already high.

What about road improvements and maintenance. Will more staff be needed here? Costs?

How much fill will be used in the development? The second strongest earthquake recorded in the State of Washington occurred in 1936 in Walla Walla. Is the city taking this into account along with the possible dangers of building houses on fill? Is there risk of liquefaction of the soils?

How will the city ensure that that dust will not get out of control with all of the grading? What's the plan to monitor this?

4. **Quality of life.** Is this development consistent with the vision laid out in the 2040 Walla Walla Comprehensive Plan? It doesn't appear to be so. It is by far the largest development and enterprise taken by the City of Walla Walla. Shouldn't it be well-supported in long-term development plans?

One rationale being used to promote this subdivision is the need for affordable housing. Why put affordable housing in an area where those who can afford these houses have to drive so far to reach work, services, grocery stores and other amenities?

Tourism is a major component of Walla Walla. How does having an out-of-character dense urban development on a major route to south-side wineries affect the overall experience?

How does having a development of this size affect how farmers will be able to move their crops?

Annexation requirements

City engineer Neal Chavre, in a memo dated April 14, 2017, under the subject "Considerations for the annexation and development of the area between Cottonwood and Kendall Road, South of Table Rock Subdivision," noted the following:

Annexation Requirements

Numerous development challenges exist for this area, primarily related to, but not limited to, drainage and transportation. It is the City's position that the developer of this property would need to safely address and accommodate upstream and downstream flows for a 100-year storm event (in addition to on site requirements). Additionally, Cottonwood Road would need to be improved to City Standards along the property's frontage. A plan and agreement to address these items to the City's satisfaction will be required prior to City staff supporting annexation of this property. Responsibility for development of this plan will be the developer's responsibility and will be subject to review and approval by applicable government agencies. Minimum criteria to be satisfied shall include the following:

Cottonwood Road shall include widened shoulders with curb and gutter-minimum road width from centerline to face of curb of 18 feet. Sidewalk, or potentially a multi-use path shall be included adjacent to new construction and must provide for pedestrian connectivity to both Wenaha Drive, in the existing Table Rock subdivision, and for future pedestrian routes along the Cottonwood Road right of way. Other transportation improvements may be required pending results of a traffic impact study analyzing the full build-out scenario.

Per the Aspect engineering report, the maximum capacity of the Table Rock bypass pipe system is approximately 45 CFS. Therefore, no more than 45 CFS will be conveyed into the Table Rock bypass system. Runoff in excess of this amount shall be either bypassed or detained.

Any proposed development shall retain at least the 25-year, 24-hour storm on site, but the design shall consider the 100-year event. The need to minimize potential bypass flow may require retainage of the 100-year event on site.

The Aspect Engineering report calculated a maximum flow rate for the existing Kendall Road culvert to be approximately 65 CFS. During the 100-year event this results in water being impounded above the Kendall Road.

Walla Walla County has indicated they will not attempt to seek any kind of dam safety certifications for the Kendall Road embankment. Therefore, the storm system below Kendall Road will be designed under the assumption that a larger culvert will be installed in Kendall Road and will cover up to 158 CFS. The City will consider proposals that provide adequate flow control either upstream or downstream of Kendall Road. However, proposed solutions must address proposed dam safety concerns, as appropriate.

The stormwater plan shall consider conveyance to Russell Creek.

Sedimentation ponds are currently being planned for the area immediately south of Russell Creek east of Cottonwood Road. The conveyance system must be compatible with this facility.

The City will not accept runoff into its storm system that has not been treated to reasonably remove sediment. Minimum design shall comply with the sediment management standard per chapter 173-204 of the WAC.

Water and sanitary sewer mains shall be extended in Cottonwood Road, as appropriate for the phase of the development being proposed.

The developer shall submit any proposals for drainage and roadway improvements to the City for review and approval. Proposals to complete improvement incrementally, as development occurs will be considered where appropriate.

Hayden Homes doesn't appear to be complying in full with the requirements of the City engineer as noted in this memo (original available at City Records). How will this be addressed?

Moving forward

Please share this with others. Cut and paste parts of it that you need. Feel free to add your comments. Review the documents. Ask your own questions after reviewing the documents linked near the top of this document.

Talk with your neighbors and your friends at church or at other social meetings.

Write letters to the Union-Bulletin, City Council members and the County Commissioners.

We plan to put ads in the UB and to consider posting signs along the affected roads.

Talking with parents with children in the affected schools is so important as traffic will have a massive impact on school safety.

Farmers need to tell other farmers about the potential traffic increase.

Where is all this anticipated growth coming from? A study done by Eastern Washington University showed Walla Walla to be the slowest-growing city in eastern Washington. Is that going to change? How? How sure is the City about population growth? Does the rate of new household formation (people getting married and forming families) justify a development of this size and density in an area that is clearly not suited for it?

Additional research

- [Aspect Engineering Report](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/6wff1c1szglrbw4l/AABB12iZSP6IhP6_pnzE_68ta?dl=0)
(https://www.dropbox.com/sh/6wff1c1szglrbw4l/AABB12iZSP6IhP6_pnzE_68ta?dl=0)
- [Walla Walla 2040 Comp Plan](https://wallawallawa.gov/home/showdocument?id=854)
(<https://wallawallawa.gov/home/showdocument?id=854>)
- [FAQs Bachtold Annexation from City](https://wallawallawa.gov/government/development-services/annexations/bachtold-annexation-faq)
(<https://wallawallawa.gov/government/development-services/annexations/bachtold-annexation-faq>)
- [Bachtold/Cottonwood Development Agreement](https://wallawallawa.gov/government/development-services/public-notice)
(<https://wallawallawa.gov/government/development-services/public-notice>)
- [Proposed Hayden Homes Development](https://tablerockhoa.org/development/)
(<https://tablerockhoa.org/development/>)

Walla Walla City Council contacts

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City Council agendas, other documents and video [available here](https://records.wallawallawa.gov:9443/agenda_publish.cfm).

(https://records.wallawallawa.gov:9443/agenda_publish.cfm)

Other City of Walla Walla contacts

Elizabeth Chamberlain, City Development Director

echamberlain@wallawallawa.gov

For questions about the development plan.

Nabiel Shawa, City Manager

Click the [email icon](#) to contact him. You can ask him to pass comments along to the City Council.

(<https://wallawallawa.gov/Home/Components/StaffDirectory/StaffDirectory/873/21?sortn=SName&sortd=asc&npage=4>)

County Commissioners

wwcocommissioners@co.walla-walla.wa.us

City Council Agendas and Video: [City Council Agenda an Video. Past Records](#)

(https://records.wallawallawa.gov:9443/agenda_publish.cfm)

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