

Dawn Hofheimer

From: Maya JB Burrell <bhathorraj@fastmail.fm>
Sent: Saturday, January 24, 2026 11:23 AM
To: Participate
Subject: comp plan public comment add-on
Attachments: water public comments 12.4.10.pages

dear ketchum,

per my previous public comment, i am adding a letter i wrote to city of ketchum on december 2010; when randy hall was mayor of ketchum and the Sun Valley Co's River Run annexation was railroaded through approval. after i read this letter to more than 200 people in attendance for this public meeting, mayor randy hall promised to get answers about the water issue before a final vote occurred. that NEVER happened. randy hall NEVER upheld his promise to the community and unfortunately, the River Run Project was approved.

since then, further density changes have been pushed through for the wooded area south of serenade lane along the bike path. this is just another unforgivable destruction of wetlands and ketchum's last forest area. also since then, IDWR has addressed water rights and mitigation. however, their solutions and agreements still do not solve the problem of future development and population increases as a result of zoning changes that various ketchum city council's continue to approve.

i am not an expert in idaho water laws, but the information in my letters and research comes from consultations with three highly respected water attorneys active in our state and region. one day, there will be accountability for these reckless and destructive density zoning increases the city of ketchum passes under the illusion of their perceived immunity and obfuscation of their water rights.

the letter i am including is also to show that my previous comments regarding randy hall's past actions have a historical basis that is already in the public record.

regards,

maya

12 April 2010

From: Maya JB Burrell
To: City of Ketchum
Re: Public Comments on the River Run Development

I have written and spoken many times about saving the woods south of River Run along the bikepath. For the record, I support Sun Valley Company's River Run Development. My objections are based upon environmental concerns that I feel the City of Ketchum has been ignoring in favor of pushing through the approval. One such issue has too many critical questions that remain unanswered; water.

Currently, the City of Ketchum is already in trouble with the Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR). In order to comply with IDWR requirements, the city needs to build another well. If you approve this River Run Project, a second well will need to be built just to service the development. In addition, both the City of Ketchum and Sun Valley Company for this property own only Junior Water Rights, not Senior. That is problematic.

To summarize the city's water audit from Steve Hansen, Utilities Department: "New water rights will be necessary for any well in the River Run area. Future water management by IDWR... could result in [the City's] Junior Water Rights being shut off in poor water years." In other words, even without the new River Run development, IDWR could tell the City of Ketchum to stop pumping if water is needed for other Senior Water Rights holders.

Just building new wells doesn't solve your problem either. You need to have the water. New wells must be mitigated (offset) by transfer of a Senior Water Right in the amount of the calculated consumptive use of the well. Currently, Sun Valley Company's Junior Water Rights are used for snowmaking in the winter. If the same amount of water were used in the summer, it would have a huge impact on the river basin and other water rights owners. This additional consumption could accelerate IDWR shutting down Ketchum's water usage creating an even bigger problem for the City.

Furthermore, any change of water use would require a "transfer application" to be approved by the IDWR, which is an expensive, time-consuming process. What if the City approves the River Run development now and two years down the road, IDWR does not approve a new well or the transfer? Who is liable? Who will pay the costs associated with this issue? The taxpayers?

To complicate matters more, a couple of years ago, there were many objections filed in the Snake River Basin Adjudication (SRBA) against Sun Valley Company's present use of its water rights. Have these rights been adjudicated in the SRBA? Or will the City of Ketchum be stepping deeper into a water rights battle that will cost taxpayers a great deal of money and even possibly its water?

It sounds from the water audit that you, the City of Ketchum, want to annex this property and approve this development in return for more water rights and the ability to build another well. Obviously this reasoning has flaws.

I have said all along, the River Run Development does not need to be so big. The excess size is wrong for the quiet neighborhood of residential West Ketchum, it is certainly wrong for the woods you plan on bulldozing for a few unnecessary single family units, and with this water issue, it is wrong for the City of Ketchum taxpayers who may be left paying the bill for a very expensive water litigation. Please, scale back this project and especially, save the woods.

Thank you.

----- Original message -----

From: Maya JB Burrell <bhathorraj@fastmail.fm>

To: City Hall of Ketchum <participate@ketchumidaho.org>

Subject: comp plan public comment

Date: Thursday, January 22, 2026 10:23 AM

dear new ketchum city council,

i want to register once again my objection to the MASSIVE increase in the warmsprings area density that has been approved.

fundamentally, this is an evacuation danger and nightmare because there is only ONE road in and out of warmsprings, which also is dependent upon a bridge no less. the other end of warmsprings is a dirt road that goes through a box canyon. city officials, especially those leaders who voted for this before you current leaders, will have actual deaths upon their consciences if a forest fire invades this area and blocks evacuation. we have already seen these tragedies in lahina, pacific pallisades and paradise. the danger is real. this kind of disregard for the responsibilities of public office is unforgivable.

in almost equal regard, the dismissal of current residents' pleas for the consideration of how the new comp plan densities will change our neighborhood character and cohesion is sociopathic. in layman language the message is clear; YOU DON'T CARE. you don't care about the concerns of current residents who pay taxes to fund our city. you don't care about our pleas to keep traffic and pollution out of our neighborhoods. you don't care about international developers coming into warmsprings and turning it into a nightmare as they have done in all the other ski towns. you don't care about the degradation of the natural resources of water and wildlife that this increased population will impact.

so while i offer my condemnation of the city's actions in approving this horrific comp plan, i am afraid that it will once again fall on deaf ears. you are prioritizing your flawed concept of potential future residents over the people who have made the sacrifices and commitment to live here now.

finally, this is a special note to Randy Hall. you betrayed our community once before in pushing through the River Run Project density many years ago. few of the current residents of ketchum have a clue about the impact this will have in our future when it is developed as you and Sun Valley Co worked to get pre-approved. and here you are again. are you back to put the final nails in the coffin of our community? or have you learned something in the intervening years of your disastrous previous tenure? the ketchum city leaders who approved this current comp plan seem to have no understanding of how the pre-approved densities, building heights and natural resource allocations in the River Run Project need to be included in these decisions regarding warmsprings and west ketchum. the project basically creates a second city center. maybe you can explain it to them. you tried your best and succeeded in hiding these dire consequences from our community at the time. have you changed your ways? i suppose there is always HOPE, like a crack of light in the darkness.

our message is clear. we who live in warmsprings do not want to become what has already happened in west ketchum. that neighborhood has been destroyed by city hall approving condo-land development and a mega mansion where wetlands crucial to river health, water fowl nesting grounds and moose migration corridors used to co-exist alongside friendly human neighbors. all that is gone forever. we mourn.

to end on a clear note;

YES to densities in the Warmsprings Base area.

NO to increased densities in the warmsprings neighborhoods that are currently single-family homes and duplexes.

see, it's not that hard.

sincerely,

maya burrell
ketchum

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Dawn Hofheimer

From: HP Boyle <boylehp@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 27, 2026 11:45 PM
To: Participate
Cc: Sarah Lurie; Andrew Theophilus
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT ON LOT

As you deliberate on the LOT referenda, I hope you will keep the following in mind.

The purpose of a LOT is to tax tourists to offset the impact of tourism. A lot of it is that. But it is telling that the staff has not provided you with the data on how much of the LOT is atax on LOCALS TO SUBSIDIZE TOURISTS.

The structure of the LOT is bad for locals. The previous administration benchmarked the categories and rates against the City of Sun Valley's practices. Why? Why let them dictate our tax regime? The City of Sun Valley has a very different economy from Ketchum, as it has no retail district. So LOT taxes in that City are almost entirely paid by tourists. That is not the case in Ketchum.

The fact is, no one right now knows how much of the LOT is paid by locals. That is a fundamentally critical data point. The right number is ZERO. That can be done by taking the LOT off retail and restaurants and raising it on Lodging. Only tourists pay the lodging LOT. Based on lodging taxes in other resort towns, it appears that lodging taxes are inelastic (raising them does not impact demand for lodging). Spencer ran for mayor four years ago on raising the LOT on lodging and reducing the LOT on locals. He was right then, and he would be right now to return to that point.

Then we need to be honest about where the LOT goes. The LOT for Air does NOT GO TO AIR PROMOTION. It goes primarily to tourism promotion. That is diametrically opposite to what the LOT is supposed to do. None of the LOT should go to Visit Sun Valley. They can keep it sunny on their own dime.

So...

1. Get rid of the LOT for Air. We used to need it. We don't need it anymore.
2. Raise the LOT on Lodging and eliminate the LOT on Locals.

That's my 2 cents. But in the spirit of the new Council's commitment to transparency and inclusion, I hope you make all the data on who pays the LOT, where it all really goes public, and then have a public dialogue about this.

Don't let the staff manipulate you on this by hiding the data.

Thank you,

Perry Boyle
Ketchum