

CITY OF ST. HELENS PLANNING DEPARTMENT
STAFF REPORT
Annexation A.5.09

DATE: May 6, 2025
TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Jennifer Dimsho, AICP, Associate Planner
APPLICANT: Paul Joe & Virginia Decker
OWNERS: JH Rental, LLC
Ronald & Virginia Decker
ZONING: Columbia County's Commercial-General (C-3)
LOCATION: 58209 Columbia River Highway and 35369 Millard Road
4N1W-8CA-3700 & 3900
PROPOSAL: Both property owners filed consent to annex because they wanted to connect to City sewer.

SITE INFORMATION / BACKGROUND

The subject property consists of two properties: one at 1 acre in size on Millard Road developed with a detached single-family dwelling and related accessory structures and the other property along US 30 at 4.47 acres in size developed with a RV/travel trailer sales (Family Fun RV). The County authorized an expansion of the use in with a new nearly 3,000 sq. ft. building for repairs of RV/travel trailers in 2022 (DR 22-06 and NCU 23-01). In addition, the County authorized use of the sales building for multiple separate office suites in 2022.

The subject properties are being processed as one annexation because they are adjacent to each other. In 2011, the single-family dwelling property owner filed a consent to annex and connected to City sewer. In 2009, the commercial property, at the time, Bing's Restaurant, filed a consent to annex and connected to City sewer. Both files were on hold until they became eligible for annexation.

Both properties have a shared, paved driveway approach from Millard Road located in an irregularly- shaped portion of the Millard Road right-of-way. The approach is developed with a concrete apron, but there are no other frontage improvements, except for a curb/gutter along Millard Road for the length of the commercial property. The commercial property also has an approach of US 30 which is fully developed with sidewalks, curb and gutter along the length of the property. The public sanitary sewer line which serves both properties runs along the shared property line between the two properties.

Abutting Zoning

North – County Commercial-General (C-3)
East – County Commercial-General (C-3)
South - County Commercial-General (C-3) & County Single-Family Residential (R-10)
West – County Single-Family Residential (R-10)



Left: 35369 Millard Road dwelling taken from the access which serves both the dwelling and Family Fun RV looking north along Millard Road

Right: 58209 Columbia River Highway (Family Fun RV) taken from the access on Millard Road looking south

Below: 58209 Columbia River Highway (Family Fun RV) US 30 frontage taken looking south along US 30



PUBLIC HEARING & NOTICE

Public hearing before the Planning Commission for *recommendation to the City Council*: May 13, 2025. Public hearing before the City Council: June 4, 2025.

Notice of this proposal was sent to the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development on April 8, 2025, through their PAPA Online Submittal website.

Notice of this proposal was sent to surrounding property owners within 300 feet of the subject property on May 1, 2025, via first class mail. Notice was sent to agencies by mail or e-mail on the same date.

Notice was published on May 2, 2025, in The Chronicle newspaper.

AGENCY REFERRALS & COMMENTS

As of the date of this staff report, no comments have been received from relevant agencies regarding this proposal.

APPLICABLE CRITERIA, ANALYSIS & FINDINGS

SHMC 17.20.120(1) – Standards for Legislative Decision

The recommendation by the commission and the decision by the council shall be based on consideration of the following factors:

- (a) The statewide planning goals and guidelines adopted under ORS Chapter 197;
- (b) Any federal or state statutes or guidelines found applicable;
- (c) The applicable comprehensive plan policies, procedures, appendices and maps; and
- (d) The applicable provisions of the implementing ordinances.
- (e) A proposed change to the St. Helens zoning district map that constitutes a spot zoning is prohibited. A proposed change to the St. Helens comprehensive plan map that facilitates a spot zoning is prohibited.

Discussion: (a) The statewide planning goals that could apply to this proposal are Goals 1, 2, 11 and 12.

- ***Statewide Planning Goal 1: Citizen Involvement.***
Goal 1 requires the development of a citizen involvement program that is widespread, allows two-way communication, provides for citizen involvement through all planning phases, and is understandable, responsive, and funded.

Generally, Goal 1 is satisfied when a local government follows the public involvement procedures set out in the statutes and in its acknowledged comprehensive plan and land use regulations.

The City's Development Code is consistent with State law with regards to notification requirements. Pursuant to SHMC 17.20.080 at least one public hearing before the Planning

Commission and City Council is required. Legal notice in a newspaper of general circulation is also required. The City has met these requirements and notified DLCD of the proposal.

- ***Statewide Planning Goal 2: Land Use Planning.***

This goal requires that a land use planning process and policy framework be established as a basis for all decisions and actions relating to the use of land. All local governments and state agencies involved in the land use action must coordinate with each other. City, county, state and federal agency and special districts plans and actions related to land use must be consistent with the comprehensive plans of cities and counties and regional plans adopted under Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS) Chapter 268.

Generally, Goal 2 requires that actions related to land use be consistent with acknowledged Comprehensive Plans and coordination with affected governments and agencies and be based on an adequate factual base. The City has an adopted Comprehensive Plan, compliance of this proposal which is addressed herein. Moreover, explanation and proof of coordination with affected agencies and factual base are described herein, as well, including inventory, needs, etc.

- ***Statewide Planning Goal 11: Public Facilities and Services.***

Goal 11 requires cities and counties to plan and develop a timely, orderly and efficient arrangement of public facilities and services to serve as a framework for urban and rural development. The goal requires that urban and rural development be "guided and supported by types and levels of urban and rural public facilities and services appropriate for, but limited to, the needs and requirements of the urban, urbanizable and rural areas to be served."

The subject property is served by McNulty water. City sewer capacities are explained below. The existing development is adequately served.

- ***Statewide Planning Goal 12: Transportation.***

Goal 12 requires cities, counties, metropolitan planning organizations, and ODOT to provide and encourage a "safe, convenient and economic transportation system." This is accomplished through development of Transportation System Plans based on inventories of local, regional and state transportation needs. Goal 12 is implemented through OAR 660, Division 12, also known as the Transportation Planning Rule ("TPR"). The TPR contains numerous requirements governing transportation planning and project development.

Traffic impacts and the City's provisions that address the TPR are explained below. This proposal will not significantly affect an existing or planned transportation facility.

(b) Section 3 of the City's Charter states that "annexation, delayed or otherwise, to the City of St. Helens, may only be approved by a prior majority vote among the electorate." However, during the 2016 Legislative Assembly, Senate Bill 1578 was passed. It states that a City shall annex the territory without submitting the proposal to the electors if certain criteria are met:

1. Property is within the UGB
2. Property will be subject to the City's Comprehensive Plan

3. Property is contiguous to the City limits or is separated by only a public right of way or body of water
4. Property conforms to all other City requirements

This property is separated by only a public right-of-way to City limits. As this proposal meets these criteria, this property will **not** be subject to a majority vote among the electorate.

Other provisions applicable to this proposal are discussed elsewhere herein.

(c) The Comprehensive Plan designation for the subject property is Unincorporated Highway Commercial. Applicable designation and zoning district for annexation are discussed later.

There is no known conflict with the general Comprehensive Plan policies identified in Chapter 19.08 SHMC. Note that SHMC 19.08.030 discusses public services and facilities and includes utility provisions (e.g., water and sewer) as well as services such as police and library. In sum, all services are intertwined; the consent to annexation allows connection to City sewer to support existing and future development on the subject property, and, once annexed, all other City services/facilities. By this process, the proposal complies with this aspect of the Comprehensive Plan.

There is no known conflict with the specific Comprehensive Plan policies identified in Chapter 19.12 SHMC.

There is no known conflict with the addendums to the Comprehensive Plan which includes Economic Opportunities Analysis (Ord. No. 3101), Waterfront Prioritization Plan (Ord. No. 3148), the Transportation Systems Plan (Ord. No. 3150), the Corridor Master Plan (Ord. No. 3181), the Parks & Trails Master Plan (Ord. No. 3191), the Riverfront Connector Plan (Ord. No. 3241), and the Housing Needs Analysis (Ord. No. 3244).

(d) Implementing ordinances are addressed in the annexation criteria below.

(e) This is not a spot zone in either the Comprehensive Plan Map or the Zoning Map.

Finding: The legislative amendment and standards criteria are met.

SHMC 17.08.060 – Transportation planning rule compliance

(1) Review of Applications for Effect on Transportation Facilities. A proposed comprehensive plan amendment, zone change or land use regulation change, whether initiated by the city or by a private interest, shall be reviewed to determine whether it significantly affects a transportation facility, in accordance with OAR 660-012-0060 (the Transportation Planning Rule ("TPR")). "Significant" means the proposal would:

- (a) Change the functional classification of an existing or planned transportation facility (exclusive of correction of map errors in an adopted plan);
- (b) Change standards implementing a functional classification system; or
- (c) As measured at the end of the planning period identified in the adopted transportation system plan:

- (i) Allow land uses or levels of development that would result in types or levels of travel or access that are inconsistent with the functional classification of an existing or planned transportation facility;
 - (ii) Reduce the performance of an existing or planned transportation facility below the minimum acceptable performance standard identified in the TSP; or
 - (iii) Worsen the performance of an existing or planned transportation facility that is otherwise projected to perform below the minimum acceptable performance standard identified in the TSP or comprehensive plan.
- (2) Amendments That Affect Transportation Facilities. Comprehensive plan amendments, zone changes or land use regulations that significantly affect a transportation facility shall ensure that allowed land uses are consistent with the function, capacity, and level of service of the facility identified in the TSP. This shall be accomplished by one or a combination of the following:
- (a) Adopting measures that demonstrate allowed land uses are consistent with the planned function, capacity, and performance standards of the transportation facility.
 - (b) Amending the TSP or comprehensive plan to provide transportation facilities, improvements or services adequate to support the proposed land uses consistent with the requirements of OAR 660-012-0060.
 - (c) Altering land use designations, densities, or design requirements to reduce demand for vehicle travel and meet travel needs through other modes of transportation.
 - (d) Amending the TSP to modify the planned function, capacity or performance standards of the transportation facility.
- (3) Traffic Impact Analysis. A traffic impact analysis shall be submitted with a plan amendment or zone change application, as applicable, pursuant to Chapter 17.156 SHMC.

Discussion: This section reflects State law regarding the Transportation Planning Rule (TPR): Transportation Planning Rule (TPR), OAR 660, Division 12. The TPR requires that where an amendment to a functional plan, an acknowledged comprehensive plan, or a land use regulation would significantly affect an existing or planned transportation facility, the local government shall put in place measures to assure that allowed land uses are consistent with the identified function, capacity, and performance standards of the facility. **Current zoning of the property is Columbia County's Commercial-General (C-3) and the City's only zoning option given annexation is Highway Commercial.**

Generally, when comparing potential land use impact on transportation facilities, the *reasonable worst case scenario* for the existing and proposed designation/zone are considered. The potential land uses are very similar for both the City and County. The City's zoning is comparable to the County with regards to the possible intensity of uses allowed and potential vehicular trips generated. Thus, this proposal will not affect an existing or planned transportation facility.

Finding: No transportation facility will be significantly affected by this proposal. No traffic impact analysis is warranted.

SHMC 17.28.030 (1) – Annexation criteria

- (a) Adequate public facilities are available to the area and have sufficient capacity to provide service for the proposed annexation area; and
- (b) Comply with comprehensive plan amendment standards and zoning ordinance amendment standards and not be in conflict with applicable comprehensive plan policies and implementing ordinances; and
- (c) Complies with state laws; and

- (d) Abutting roads must meet city standards or property owner will be required to sign and record an irrevocable consent to local improvement district; and
- (e) Property exceeding 10 acres in gross size must show a need on the part of the city for such land if it is designated residential (e.g., less than five years' supply of like designated lands in current city limits).

Discussion: (a) Water – The site is currently connected to McNulty Water.

Sewer – Since the applicants filed consents to annex in 2009 and 2011, they have both since connected the properties to City sewer.

With regards to *capacity*, the City's wastewater treatment plant currently has a daily limit (physically and as permitted by DEQ) to handle over 50,000 pounds of Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) and a monthly average limit of 26,862 pounds. This is the "loading" or potency of the wastewater received by the plant. The average daily BOD is well below this at only 1,500 pounds. Sanitary sewer *capacity* is adequate.

With regards to *conveyance*, the city adopted a new **Wastewater Master Plan (WWMP)** in November 2021 that identifies undersized trunk lines already operating at or above capacity that further development of the subject property (e.g., land division creating new parcels) would depend on. The WWMP can be found here:

<https://www.sthelensoregon.gov/engineering/page/public-infrastructure-master-plans>

If the subject property was redeveloped in the future with a proposal that required a land use permit (e.g., Site Development Review or Partition) while the conveyance issue still exists, the city may implement a proportional fee as a condition of approval to contribute to the conveyance projects in the WWMP to help offset the deficiency. Because single-family dwellings and duplexes are not subject to Site Development Review per SHMC 17.96.020, the fee would not apply to that type of development. As a property that has an existing detached single-family dwelling and an existing commercial development, this fee would not apply to this annexation.

Transportation - As described above, this proposal poses no significant impact on a transportation facility.

Finding: Adequate public facilities are available to the area and have sufficient capacity to provide service for the proposed annexation area.

(b) The land use of one of the subject properties is a detached single-family dwelling. This is not an allowed use in the City's Highway Commercial (HC) zoning district. It is also not allowed as a sole principal use in the County's C-3 zone. It is a non-conforming use of the property and will continue to be upon annexation into the City.

The land use of the other subject property is RV and trailer sales and repair, and office uses which are an allowed use in the City's Highway Commercial (HC) zoning district. **In July 2024, the County found an unauthorized expansion of the site's parking area which required a land use submittal. As of the date of this staff report, this remains unresolved.** The unauthorized expansion of land use on the site will become an enforcement issue for the City once it is annexed.

Finding: There is no known conflict with the Comprehensive Plan and implementing ordinances.

(c) With regards to Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS), city annexations of territory must be undertaken consistent with ORS 222.111 to 222.183.

Pursuant to ORS 222.111(1), a City may only annex territory that is not within another City, and the territory must either be contiguous to the annexing City or be separated from the City only by a body of water or public right-of-way. The subject property is not within another City's jurisdiction and City of St. Helens corporate limits is contiguous to the City limited along a portion of the east property line.

Although undertaking an annexation is authorized by state law, the manner in which a city proceeds with annexation is also dictated in the city charter. ORS 222.111(1) references a city's charter as well as other ORS. St. Helens' Charter requirements pertaining to annexations are noted above.

Per ORS 222.111(2) an annexation may be initiated by the owner of real property or the city council. This annexation request was initiated by the property owner. Further, ORS 222.125 requires that that all property owners of the subject property to be annexed and at least half of the electors residing on the property consent in writing to the annexation. These documents were submitted with the annexation application.

(d) The subject property has access off Millard Road which is within the County's jurisdiction. The roadway is classified as a minor arterial in our TSP which has a minimum right-of-way of 60'. This is met in some areas, but not met in other areas where the width is only 50'. The roadway is not developed with complete frontage improvements (sidewalks, curb, gutter, and landscaping) abutting the subject properties. Although, there is some curb and gutter and a developed driveway approach serving both properties.

The other access is off Highway 30, which is within ODOT's jurisdiction. It is developed with complete frontage improvements fronting the subject property.

This property is not the subject of a current development land use review, which provides the legal nexus and proportionality to require frontage improvements or right-of-way dedications. As such, no improvements or requirements are warranted with this proposal. At the time of future development, this would be considered.

(e) The subject property is not zoned residential. This does not apply.

Finding: The annexation approval criteria are met for this proposal.

SHMC 17.28.030 (2) – Annexation criteria

The plan designation and the zoning designation placed on the property shall be the city's zoning district which most closely implements the city's comprehensive plan map designation.

Discussion: The Comprehensive Plan designation is currently Unincorporated Highway Commercial (UHC). The City's only zoning option given annexation is Highway Commercial (HC). The Comprehensive Plan designation would thus be Highway Commercial (Incorporated) (HC).

Finding: Upon annexation, the subject property's Comprehensive Plan designation shall be Highway Commercial (Incorporated) and zoned Highway Commercial (HC).

SHMC 17.112.020 – Established & Developed Area Classification criteria

- (1) Established Area.
 - (a) An "established area" is an area where the land is not classified as buildable land under OAR 660-08-0005;
 - (b) An established area may include some small tracts of vacant land (tracts less than an acre in size) provided the tracts are surrounded by land which is not classified as buildable land; and
 - (c) An area shown on a zone map or overlay map as an established area.
- (2) Developing Area. A "developing area" is an area which is included in the city's buildable land inventory under the provisions of OAR except as provided by subsection (1)(b) of this section.

Discussion: OAR 660-008-0005 classifies *buildable land* as:

Residentially designated land within the urban growth boundary, including both vacant and developed land likely to be redeveloped, that is suitable, available and necessary for residential uses. Publicly owned land is generally not considered available for residential uses. Land is generally considered "suitable and available" unless it:

- (a) Is severely constrained by natural hazards as determined under Statewide Planning Goal 7;
- (b) Is subject to natural resource protection measures determined under Statewide Planning Goals 5, 6, 15, 16, 17 or 18;
- (c) Has slopes of 25 percent or greater;
- (d) Is within the 100-year flood plain; or
- (e) Cannot be provided with public facilities.

OAR 660-008-0005 generally defines "Buildable Land" as vacant residential property not constrained by natural hazards or resources, and typically not publicly owned.

Finding: The subject property is not zoned residential. This provision does not apply.

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

Based upon the facts and findings herein, staff recommends approval of this annexation and that upon annexation, the subject property have a Comprehensive Plan designation of Highway Commercial (Incorporated) HC and be zoned Highway Commercial (HC).

*This annexation will **not** be subject to voter approval subsequent to this land use process.*

Attachment: Aerial Map

Annexation A.5.09 Aerial Map

