

The Oregonian

IN MY OPINION - DEVELOPMENT VS. TRANSPORTATION - Let's think before we act on **Hayden Island**

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Hayden Island, the small stretch of land just off the southern banks of the Columbia River, is a jewel of a regional resource that is about to get flooded with ill-conceived development --unless we do something about it.

Out-of-town developers are pushing two new poorly conceived projects on the **island**, which, incredibly in Portland --the city of planning --has never had a neighborhood plan.

Hayden Island residents insist Portland call a timeout to assess the impacts of these potential developments. In government terms, that means a temporary moratorium on large-scale commercial development. Oregon law allows cities to temporarily halt development in an area "to prevent a shortage of public facilities."

We don't take lightly a call to halt development, even momentarily. This is especially true on a site so central to the region's economy. But it's precisely the **island's** central location that merits this pause for reflection and planning. Consider these facts:

Oregon and Washington's future increasingly depends on domestic and international trade. This is even more acute in the Portland region, where our economy is the nation's third-most trade dependent.

Effective trade is dependent upon transportation infrastructure that is safe, reliable and convenient. Today our transportation system --especially Interstate 5, which runs through the heart of **Hayden Island** --approaches failure. We're choked with cars. That's why we're expected to spend more than \$2 billion in federal, state and local money to rebuild the I-5 bridge across the **island** and over the river.

Now, before a new span can be built, imagine two new large-scale, auto-oriented commercial developments on an **island** whose only access point is I-5. One proposal, a Wal-Mart, would bring by its own estimates possibly 1,000 new auto trips every hour. I-5's performance could shift from crisis to collapse.

As leaders in the region, we take seriously our obligation to plan for and make strategic investments in the infrastructure that builds our economy and future success. We must broaden the transportation options to **Hayden Island** to include safe, convenient pedestrian and bicycle access, light rail and better auto access to benefit both local

residents and those who drive our trade-dependent economy.

Hayden Island's future rests on this decision to pursue a temporary moratorium. Without it, we'll send the **island** up the creek without a paddle. With a pause for planning, we can allow the **island** to put a paddle in the water and guide itself toward a working future with a vibrant waterfront and a transportation system that works.

If we do what's best for the **island** and region, we will plan our way to economic and community success.

Royce Pollard is mayor of Vancouver. Sam Adams is a Portland city commissioner. Eugene Rogers is chairman of HINooN, **Hayden Island's** neighborhood association.