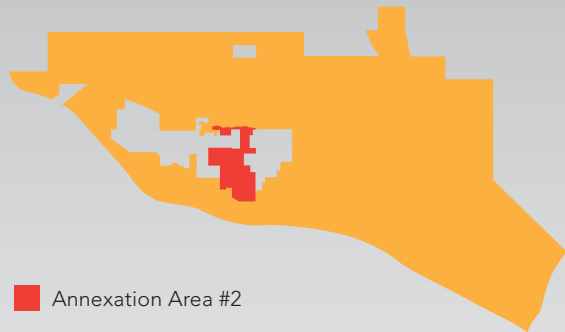


# Annexation: Best for Pasco

As reported in the August Pulse, in June the City Council initiated annexation proceedings for a portion of the unincorporated “donut hole” (island) in response to efforts by citizens in the island to form a new city. Considering the negative aspects and substantial cost to Pasco taxpayers caused by a “city-within-a-city,” the annexation of “Area 2,” with approximately 1500 residents, was deemed necessary by the City Council to stop the incorporation effort.

Prior to its final decision on the annexation proposal, the City solicited interest from Area #2 residents in serving on an “Annexation Facts Committee,” to review a comparison of regulations, fees and taxes between the City and the unincorporated area. Twelve citizens spent six weeks in August and September reviewing and refining the comparison which has come to be known as the “Matrix.” The committee concluded that, with the exception of laws for dog control, there are no significant differences in regulations and costs (for the average property owner) between the City and the unincorporated area. The members of the committee, along with Mayor Watkins and Councilmember Hoffmann who worked with the group in the review process, hosted a neighborhood meeting on October 17 for all Area #2 residents. Approximately 80 residents attended to ask questions and discuss the Matrix contents.

On October 29, the City Council held a formal public hearing on the annexation proposal. Of the 11 residents of Area 2 that spoke at the hearing, 9 favored annexation rather than becoming part of a “city within a city”. At the conclusion of the hearing, the City Council approved the annexation ordinance by a vote of five in favor, two opposed.



The annexation of Area #2 into the City will be effective January 1, 2013.

While the annexation of Area #2 creates, two smaller donut holes and a somewhat irregular boundary in some places, that condition is likely to change over time. “In a perfect world, all boundaries would be straight, easily recognizable lines...it is better to live with a temporary irregular boundary rather than live for many years with the significant problems created by a city within the City of Pasco,” noted Mayor Matt Watkins.

The City had initiated discussions with Fire Protection District No. 3 and the Franklin County Commission in the summer of 2011 in the hopes of reaching an agreement for an orderly timetable and agreement toward the annexation of the entire donut hole (an approach approved in law in 2009 and favored by both the City and the Fire District as opposed to several individual annexation measures) Unfortunately, the County suspended talks when the incorporation proposal surfaced in May 2012. The City hopes the recent defeat of the new city idea will open the door for Franklin County to resume discussions with the City and Fire District for an annexation plan.

## CITY COUNCIL:

**Mayor Matt Watkins (At Large)**  
416-6696, councilmatt@mattwatkins.net

**Mayor ProTem Rebecca Francik (Dist. 5)**  
545-6134, francikcouncil@pasco-wa.gov

**Councilman Mike Garrison (Dist. 2)**  
545-3404, Mike.g@a-lcompressedgases.com

**Councilman Bob Hoffmann (Dist. 3)**  
547-7373, rshoff@juno.com

**Councilman Al Yenney (Dist. 1)**  
547-8021, yenneycouncil@pasco-wa.gov

**Councilman Tom Larsen (At Large)**  
545-9916, tomlarsenpasco@aol.com

**Councilman Saul Martinez (Dist. 4)**  
547-7285, martinezcouncil@pasco-wa.gov

## MANAGER & OFFICIALS:

**City Manager Gary Crutchfield**  
545-3404, citymanager@pasco-wa.gov

**Deputy City Manager Stan Strebel**  
543-5760, strebels@pasco-wa.gov

**Police Chief Bob Metzger**  
545-3481, pascopolice@pasco-wa.gov

**Fire Chief Bob Gear**  
545-3426, pascofire@pasco-wa.gov

**Community Dev. Director Rick White**  
545-3441, communitydevelopment@pasco-wa.gov

**Public Works Director Ahmad Qayoumi**  
543-5738, publicworks@pasco-wa.gov

**Admin. & Community Services  
Director Rick Terway**  
543-5757, acsadmin@pasco-wa.gov

Send Comments to: [Communications@pasco-wa.gov](mailto:Communications@pasco-wa.gov)

The Pasco City Council meets every Monday at 7pm (except for 5th Mondays) at City Hall, 525 N. 3rd Ave. Watch the Council meetings LIVE on PSC-TV Channel 12 on Charter Cable, or on the web at [www.pasco-wa.gov/video](http://www.pasco-wa.gov/video).

the **Pulse** BI-MONTHLY (APRIL - DEC)



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### 4th Avenue Project Completed

The 4th Avenue corridor project, started earlier this year, finished up in late October with traffic and aesthetic improvements. The goals of the project were to “calm” traffic in the busy 4th Avenue corridor between Marie and Sylvester Streets, to improve pedestrian safety and provide safer access along the route.

A roundabout was installed at the intersection of Marie Street, 4th Avenue, and 3rd Avenue which is designed to increase safety, together with reducing traffic to one lane in either direction. Landscaped medians, new handicapped access ramps, and new lighting are part of the project which assist pedestrians with street crossings for Lourdes Medical Center and the Franklin County Courthouse. Additionally, new wider sidewalks were installed from Court Street to Sylvester Street for pedestrian access.

The City plans to improve the segment of the 4th Avenue corridor which lies north of Court Street in the future as funds are available. For more information on the project, contact Public Works at 545-3444.



### Street Crimes Unit on the streets

With the voter’s approval of the public safety sales tax in late 2011 and City Council authorization, the Pasco Police Department will be able to provide a new Street Crimes Unit starting in January. This new plain clothes unit will be made up of 3 officers and a sergeant. The unit will work on crimes that will include gangs and those crimes that are serial in nature, such as multiple burglaries. The hiring and training of new officers over the course of 2012 has been completed for staffing of this new division. The Street Crimes Unit will enhance patrol functions and allow the police to have more “eyes” in the community. The new group will also work closely with other area departments and the Metro Drug Unit. For more information on the Street Crimes Unit, contact the Pasco Police Department at 545-3421.

### HOLIDAY OBSERVANCE

City Offices will be closed:

Monday and Tuesday, December 24th and 25th for Christmas Day	Monday and Tuesday, December 31st and January 1st for New Year’s Day
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Monday, January 21st for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

*For more information about the City,  
visit our website at [www.pasco-wa.gov](http://www.pasco-wa.gov)*



### First Night Tri-Cities is on again for December 31st at CBC!

For details, visit [www.pascoparksandrec.com](http://www.pascoparksandrec.com)  
or call 545-3456.

### New Rec Guide out December 4

The new Pasco Parks and Recreation Guide will be out December 4, with registration starting December 11. Sign up for a class or program as soon as possible, as spaces are limited for some programs. For more information, call 545-3456. The Guide is available in City offices, other public facilities, local stores, and online at [pascoparksandrec.com](http://pascoparksandrec.com).



### 2013 Budget: More Services Through Savings

The City Council reviewed the Preliminary 2013 Budget at its November 13th Workshop. While the City has “held the line” in employee growth over the past few years, the proposed budget provides for some key additions:

- 4 police officers to start the “Street Crimes/ Gang Unit”, funded by the Public Safety Sales Tax passed by voters in 2011
- 2 new firefighters, funded largely by reducing overtime expenses
- 1 Code Enforcement Officer, restoring the position cut from the budget 4 years ago
- 2 computer support positions (current staffing is only 4 for an organization of over 300)

Though the Street Crimes Unit is covered by new revenue (Public Safety Sales Tax), the other new positions will be largely paid by major reductions in General Fund expenditures. Fortunately, deliberate efforts over the past two years have created General Fund savings totaling \$1.35 million.

These reductions in expenses, despite the additional positions, help keep City taxes low, with a proposed \$1.96 per \$1,000 City property tax rate for 2013, which is 26% lower than the \$2.66 per \$1,000 rate in 2004.