



Morrow County

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www.morrowcountyor.gov

Support
Amd#266-26

February 4, 2026

Aaron Palmquist, City Manager
City of Irrigon
500 NE Main Avenue
Irrigon, OR 97844

RE: Code Amendment AMD#266-26

Dear Aaron:

On behalf of the Morrow County Board of Commissioners, please consider this letter in support of the proposed code amendment. The Board of Commissioners, in their meeting today, requested that staff submit this letter on their behalf.

The proposed code amendment would decrease the minimum lot size in residential zones and allow landowners the opportunity to increase residential density and in turn build more houses in the city.

As you know, there is significant commercial and industrial growth taking place in the northern region of the county. That growth in turn has generated commensurate demand for housing. The proposed smaller lot sizes and increase in density creates additional opportunities to increase housing in the city. Increasing housing opportunities inside city limits has the secondary benefit of decreasing demand for housing outside city limits that rely on domestic water from the Lower Umatilla Basin Groundwater Management Area (LUBGWMA).

Please accept the county support for the proposed zone change.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Matthew Jensen", is written over a circular stamp that partially overlaps the signature.

Matthew Jensen
County Administrator

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tamra Mabbott", is written in a cursive style.

Tamra Mabbott
Planning Director

Barbara Phillips
80610 Wagon Wheel Loop
Irrigon, OR 97844

Irrigon Planning Commission
500 NE Main Ave.
Irrigon, OR 97844

February 3, 2026

Subject: Opposition to Proposed Zoning Change – Land Use Notice AMD 266-26

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed zoning changes in Irrigon's Residential Zone, specifically regarding the reduction of minimum lot sizes, the reduction of side setbacks, and the reduction of minimum home square footage requirements. While we recognize the need for thoughtful housing growth, the proposed density increase poses significant risks to the long-term viability and character of Irrigon.

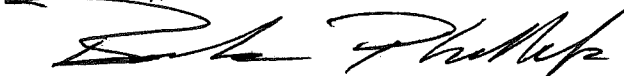
As a resident of Irrigon for 28 years, and owner of developable acreage within City limits, I believe these changes will negatively affect the character, safety, and property values of our community for the following reasons:

- **Incompatibility with Existing Neighborhood Character:** The existing homes in Irrigon were designed with larger lot sizes and a consistent, suburban feel. Transitioning to high-density lots would lead to a "crowded" feel that contradicts the very reasons residents choose to invest in this rural community.
 - **Reduced Setbacks Create Safety and Privacy Issues:** Reduced side setbacks, which allow homes to be closer together, will decrease privacy for existing residents and raise fire safety concerns regarding the space between structures.
 - **Infrastructure and Public Safety:** Our existing roads, water, and sewage systems were engineered for low-density residential use. Increasing the number of households without a proportional upgrade to infrastructure risks systemic strain, increased traffic congestion, and diminished emergency response efficiency.
 - **Impact on Property Values:** The introduction of high-density housing into a single-family residential area, along with smaller, non-conforming homes, could likely result in a decline in property values.
- Thank you for your time and consideration of these concerns.

I respectfully urge the Commission to deny this application. We advocate for a development strategy that prioritizes the quality of our living standards over the sheer quantity of units.

Thank you for your dedication to the future of Irrigon.

Sincerely,



Barbara Phillips

Hello Aaron,

Please see the email comments below from our Housing Accountability and Production Office with regards to the upcoming code amendment application #AMD266-26 public hearing on Thursday.

I am planning to attend the meeting virtually. Please let me know if you would like to catch up prior to the meeting.

Thanks. Take care and talk soon,

Dawn

Dawn Marie Hert [Hear my name](#) .

Eastern Oregon Regional Representative | Community Services Division

Pronouns: She/Her/Hers

Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development

Eastern Oregon University, One University Blvd, Badgely Hall, Room 233A | LaGrande, OR 97850-2807

Cell: 503-956-8163 | Main: 503-373-0050

dawn.hert@dlcd.oregon.gov | www.oregon.gov/LCD

From: MARQUARDT Ryan * DLCD <Ryan.MARQUARDT@dlcd.oregon.gov>

Sent: Monday, February 2, 2026 1:19 PM

To: HERT Dawn * DLCD <Dawn.Hert@dlcd.oregon.gov>

Subject: City of Irrigon amendments (AMD 266-26)

Hi Dawn,

I'm providing HAPO comments on the above-referenced casefile for amendments to Irrigon's zoning code. The proposed amendments make the city's residential development regulations less stringent and support the statewide goals of increasing housing production, affordability, and choice. HAPO hasn't identified any issues with the proposed amendments and state housing laws applicable to the city.

The city is also encouraged to pursue allowing ADUs, which was mentioned in the applicant's materials as an option. Irrigon's current certified population estimate is 2,133. ORS 197A.425 requires cities with a population greater than 2,500 to allow an ADU, and may be applicable to the city in the future depending on population growth. When the ADU statute is codified, the siting and development standards must be clear and objective, as required by ORS 197A.400. A standard requiring general visual compatibility would not satisfy that statute. HAPO staff is available to discuss options for design standards that would be clear and objective, including use of model codes.

Let me know if I can answer any questions.

Thanks,

Ryan

Ryan Marquardt, AICP

Housing Planner | Housing Accountability and Production Office

Pronouns: he/him

Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development

[635 Capitol Street NE, Suite 150 | Salem, OR 97301-2540](#)

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The Housing Accountability and Production Office is a joint office between the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) and the Department of Consumer and Business Services' Building Codes Division (BCD).



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

Department of Transportation

Region 5

3012 Island Avenue

LaGrande, OR 97850

February 4, 2026

City of Irrigon VIA EMAIL: clerk@ci.irrigon.or.us
500 NE Main Ave.
Irrigon, OR 97844

Subject: *City of Irrigon Amendment to City Land Use Ordinances AMD#266-26*

The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) has received notice of the proposed amendment to the city land use ordinance submitted by LandWise, LLC on behalf of Olin Homes, LLC, AMD#266-26. ODOT has jurisdiction of Highway 002/US730, including responsibilities for managing access within the corridor. US730 is the major transportation facility through the City of Irrigon.

The proposal would amend the ordinance in relation to dwelling lot size on all residentially zoned land. This reduction in lot size would result in an increase in residential lots within the City of Irrigon and therefore an increase in trips to and from the transportation facilities, including the highway. The potential increase in trips is not quantified in this proposal; a determination as to whether the increase is potentially significant should be made pursuant to Transportation Planning Rules Section 660-012-0060. It is unlikely these trips would otherwise be evaluated at the development stage in a traffic impact analysis.

Additionally, ODOT has access control along a large portion of the highway abutting residentially zoned land. ODOT anticipates reduction in minimum lot size could increase the number of properties with highway frontage resulting in an increase in highway connections, and approach relocation/new approach requests. Properties abutting the highway should be aware of their highway access rights for planning purposes. "A reservation of access affords the right to apply for an approach but does not guarantee approval of an application for state highway approach or the location of an approach." (OAR 734-051). The City should also encourage utilization of shared connections or alternative access from lower order streets where feasible upon development/redevelopment to preserve the capacity and functionality of the highway.



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

Department of Transportation

Region 5

3012 Island Avenue

LaGrande, OR 97850

ODOT appreciates the opportunity to provide review and comment on this proposal. Please enter this letter into the record of the proceedings. Also, please provide me with a copy of the decision.

Respectfully,

Kelli Nicole Martin, P.E.

Region 5 Access Management Engineer

Cc: Rich Lani, District 12 Manager
Paul Howland, District 12
Tom Lapp, District 12 Permit Specialist
Cheryl Jarvis-Smith, Region 5 Planner