



Board of County Commissioners

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Representative Tobias Read, Chair
Transportation and Economic Development Committee
900 Court Street Street, NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Representative Read and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on behalf of HB 3130. My name is Tammy Baney and I am a County Commissioner from Deschutes County. I am speaking today on behalf of my Board of Commissioners. HB 3130 is important legislation to promote economic development in the City of La Pine and Central Oregon, improve the Highway 97 traffic flow, and improve pedestrian safety.

Deschutes County worked with Representatives McLane and Whisnant to introduce HB 3130 in order to allow Deschutes County to use proceeds from the sale of County industrial land as match funds to partner with ODOT for transportation upgrades to the US 97/First Street intersection in the City of La Pine (please see page 3). Without these improvements, applications for industrial and other development projects in the La Pine Industrial Park and surrounding area will be denied under existing land use regulations because the traffic generated by such projects will cause the intersection to fail. Recently, development of a grocery store in the area was denied due to the anticipated impact of the project on this intersection.

As background, Deschutes County owns the La Pine Industrial Park. Proceeds from the sale of properties within the Park have been deposited by the County into an Industrial Development Revolving Fund. Even though these are County funds the expenditure of industrial land proceeds is governed by ORS 275.318(3).

Deschutes County Legal Counsel has issued a legal opinion that the narrow purview of ORS 275.318 limits the use of Industrial Development Fund proceeds to specific components of project development and cannot be used for necessary off-site utility or transportation infrastructure improvements, such as installation of a traffic control device. Legislative Counsel agrees with this analysis.

In addition to operational issues that have resulted in lost development opportunities, the unsignalized intersection of US 97/First Street is described in the US 97 La Pine Corridor Plan as follows:

- a. There have been 14 reported crashes in a five-year period, including eight injury crashes.
- b. Inadequate sight distance in all directions.
- c. Significant difficulty in pedestrian use, particularly students crossing to utilize commercial services (see photos listed as Exhibit 3-1 and 3-2 below).
- d. Drivers on US 97 do not yield to pedestrians.
- e. It is difficult for drivers and pedestrians to judge oncoming speed of traffic on US 97.



Exhibit 3-1. Pedestrian crossings at 1st Street



Exhibit 3-2. Pedestrian crossings at 1st Street.

This important legislative fix is critical to the future development of the La Pine Industrial Park and surrounding privately held industrial properties. Such development will facilitate much needed industry and jobs to the City of La Pine and surrounding area. A well-functioning US 97 corridor is vital to the well being of Central Oregon. Economic growth and job development rely heavily on safe, effective, and reliable transportation systems.

Thank you for your time today and I urge your support of HB 3130. I also have a letter of support signed by the City of La Pine Mayor and Councilors.

Sincerely,

Tammy Baney
Deschutes County Commissioner

Location of the Proposed Signal at US 97/First Street, City of La Pine

