



City of Prineville

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#### URBANIZING LANDS IN THE URBAN GROWTH BOUNDARY

Prineville, OR – Growth issues are at the forefront of discussion amongst citizens in Prineville. As vacant lands within the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) develop with new homes and businesses the City of Prineville staff are required to make sure that development is consistent with local and State law. The City is currently updating development codes to be in line with the recently adopted Comprehensive Plan, but conflicts can and do occur between the values of the community, existing regulations, and State law.

The City Council recently reviewed such a conflict when it heard an appeal filed by the developers of McKay Meadows subdivision. In this case, the City Council found that a portion of the City Zoning Ordinance was not consistent with State law. The Council was required to remove several conditions previously imposed by the Prineville Planning Commission, which would have limited the number of homes and restricted the developer from building 2-story homes.

McKay Meadows, lies north of Peters Road on North Main and abuts Barnes Butte Estates. Both areas are intended for urban residential development and in an area just beginning to undergo redevelopment. The McKay Meadows project is the second project along North Main (the first being Saddle Ridge) to receive negative comments regarding infill development. McKay Meadows is a new subdivision that addresses needed housing and is developing as required by the R-2 zone. Barnes Butte Estates is a County residential area within the Urban Growth Boundary that is currently low density.

Residents near McKay Meadows attended the Planning Commission meetings, commenting on the need to limit urban development by requesting that density

levels and height restrictions be conditions of approval. This situation highlights the local challenges of developing the UGB to an urban standard as advocated by City policies and State regulations. The balancing act between accommodating growth as required, and reducing impacts upon existing residents, will be a continual challenge for the community.

The City's recently adopted Comprehensive Land Use Plan has many guidelines for development, which are intended to protect of the values of the City. The lands around McKay Meadows are inside the UGB. The UGB is required by the State of Oregon to provide a supply of land for the future growth of the City. Development is regulated according to an Urban Growth Boundary Management Agreement between the City of Prineville and Crook County. Lands inside the City limits are regulated by the City's Zoning Ordinance and Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

The City's goal is to transition development to lower density areas on the fringe of the UGB where greater buffers are needed to separate urban uses from rural uses. Lands within the UGB may also require greater buffers where warranted and when consistent with State law. The upcoming zoning ordinance revisions will detail various strategies for enforcing proper buffers and compatibility regulations. Overall, the community has expressed a *value* to preserve certain areas of the UGB "as is". This *value* will require an extensive public involvement process to develop new regulations as necessary to implement the values and goals listed in the Comprehensive Plan.

The overall density desired by the community was determined during the UGB expansion process and is an average of 5 units per acre. The density requirements are monitored by the State of Oregon and seen as an important part of the planning objective of preserving agricultural lands and open spaces. Urbanization of the UGB lands at this density helps to limit future UGB expansions.

Clearly, there is a mix of sentiments regarding growth. On one hand, the infill development of the UGB and the development of private vacant lands is to be expected as the population increases. On the other hand, infill development can be contentious and frustrating as lands once thought to be open or low density in perpetuity are developed with housing and mixed-use development for our new citizens. Mixed-use development techniques, as described in the Comprehensive Plan, will ensure protection of natural resources, required open space and recreation areas, a range of housing types, and complete neighborhoods. This development technique also helps to reduce the impact of new development upon adjacent areas and improves aesthetics.

While the debate and challenge of growth will continue, it is also important to realize that more compact growth helps utilize limited infrastructure and resources more efficiently without subsidy from existing residents. Nonetheless, the dramatic changes resulting from infill development and growth will be discussed thoroughly in many venues in the years ahead – both pro and con.