



MEMO

May 27, 2026

To: Bend Economic Development Advisory Board (BEDAB)

From: Kirk Schueler, Managing Member - Taylor Brooks

Re: Shovel Ready Industrial Lots

This memo was prepared for the members of BEDAB to present arguments for proposed changes to the Bend Development Code and strategies to support the delivery of shovel-ready industrial lots in Bend. Bend has had very low vacancies in its industrial buildings for many years, a sign that it has not kept up with demand. A consequence has been that industrial users have migrated to cities in Central Oregon that have available shovel-ready industrial land and tend to be more competitive both in land price and land use process.

Taylor Brooks believes that Juniper Ridge is a key to the future of economic growth in Bend. Juniper Ridge industrial land is characterized by rocky slopes and mounds with slopes in excess of 10%.

The State of Oregon defines shovel-ready land as “market-ready, employment-oriented, zoned for industrial uses available for development within 180 days or less”. To be available for development within 180 days, lots need to be served by full street and utility improvements and be relatively flat. The 2016 Economic Opportunities Analysis (EOA) that was adopted and incorporated as Appendix K of the City of Bend Comprehensive Plan (Policy 6-8) states “*one of the key factors that businesses consider when making decisions about where to locate is the availability of vacant, large, and flat parcels of land*”(page 30). The EOA notes that industrial sites should have slope of 5% or less. In our experience a maximum of 3% slope is ideal for industrial sites.

In 2025, Taylor Brooks purchased 95 acres in Juniper Ridge from the City of Bend. We see ourselves and the City as having mutual goals around economic development; we both desire to see the development of buildings in Juniper Ridge serving growing and new businesses.

In the Fall of 2025, we completed a 5-lot subdivision of a 20.8-acre tract along Cooley Road. We have plans to construct Phase 1 of a 5-phase subdivision of the remaining 75-acre tract later this year. While one lot on Cooley Road was sold to the Central Oregon Irrigation District, the remaining 4 lots remain available. Efficiently bringing those lots into shovel ready condition faces regulatory and market hurdles.

From a cost competitiveness perspective, it is much more efficient to grade larger sites than smaller ones. Grading the entire 15 acres making up the remaining 4 lots on Cooley Road has the potential to conservatively save \$87,000 per acre compared to grading a single lot at a time. The biggest savings



come from the large scope of work and the ability to balance the cuts and fills over the 15 acres and avoid hauling material off or onto the individual lots. Additionally, completing the grading prior to selling lots will save 4 to 6 months of grading time for the construction of a building.

Juniper Ridge is uniformly covered with Western Juniper trees. The city's Tree Preservation Code requires an owner to locate and tag every regulated tree with a diameter-at-breast-height (DBH) of 6 inches or greater before any grading can be undertaken.

The Tree Preservation Code establishes minimum tree preservation standards that if not met require mitigation in the form of planting new trees or paying an in-lieu fee for each mitigation tree not planted. We have two examples of what that fee might look like. If we were to mass-grade the 4 Cooley Road lots, leaving no trees and assuming no mitigation trees planted, the mitigation fee would be approximately \$151,000 (\$10,067/acre of land). We are under contract to sell a lot in Phase 1 of the 75-acre tract once platted. The buyer has a preliminary site plan that removes all but a couple trees. To mitigate they will need to plant 116 mitigation trees. Street trees and other on-site trees planted by them will offset against that requirement, leaving them approximately 79 trees to mitigate, equating to a fee of \$47,400 (\$8,712/acre of land).

We propose that the Tree Preservation Code be amended to de-regulate trees on industrially zoned land. This would provide a simpler and less expensive path to obtaining grading permits to create shovel ready industrial lots. City Council recognized that industrial lands should be treated differently than residential and commercial lands when they adopted a Tree Preservation Code that allows industrial lands to proceed to mitigation under a Discretionary Track (the Clear and Objective Track requires preservation of at least 5% of the total DBH), our request represents a continuation of that recognition.