



*Where Life is Sweet*

Mayor and Members of the City Council  
**STAFF REPORT**  
For the Meeting of May 11, 2026

**Title/Subject**

Public Hearing - Rename E Airport Road to E Veterans Avenue

**Summary and Background**

The city council is holding a public hearing to consider the renaming of E Airport Road to E Veterans Avenue. The issue has been historically raised at both the city and county level. Most recently Umatilla County considered changing the name of E Airport Road in 2017 and chose not to change the name at that time. The city council received a recommendation from the airport board at the February 23, 2026 meeting and asked the city engineer to study and prepare a recommendation on whether renaming of E Airport Road is appropriate.

The city engineer's report was submitted to the city council on April 13, 2026. For reference, the engineer's report is again attached to this memo. The findings of the report state that there is a similarly named road (Airport Way) within 2,000 feet and the similarity of the names could cause confusion for emergency response, delivery services, and event attendees. Further since E Airport Road does not provide direct access to the Hermiston Municipal Airport, it will reduce potential confusion over airport access in the future. Following receipt of the engineer's report, the city council set a date for a public hearing on May 11, 2026.

Testimony was presented to the city council at the April 13 meeting. Although the April 13 meeting was not a public hearing, testimony received is included in this report and questions raised to the city council are presented here where appropriate.

*Item 1.* Notice not provided to affected residents on E Airport Road.

The state law requires notice of public hearing to be provided. Until the hearing date of May 11 was established, notice from the city is premature. ORS 227.120 establishes notice requirements for changing a street name. Per the ORS, a notice must be published in a newspaper of local circulation not less than once in the week prior to the hearing. City staff has exceeded the noticing requirement. The notice of hearing was published in the East Oregonian twice prior to the hearing on April 29 and May 6. No notice by direct mail is required. However, the city provided a notice by direct mail to all addresses on E Airport Road and to all properties within 200 feet of E Airport Road on April 29. A total of 36 notices were issued by direct mail.

*Item 2.* City has similar street names in other locations such as N First Street and N First Place.

Street names and suffixes are governed by §94.22 of the Hermiston Code of Ordinances. Numbered streets are unique in the code. Although the city tries to avoid similarly named streets, numbered streets form the east/west addressing grid (e.g. houses between 8<sup>th</sup> Street and 9<sup>th</sup> Street will have 800 numbers). The distance between numbered streets may sometimes exceed a typical block length of 400-600 feet. Under 94.22(B) *A street lying between numbered streets shall be denominated by number and designated "place", for example, First Place.* Street designations such as NE 13<sup>th</sup> Street, followed by NE 13<sup>th</sup> Place, and finally NE 14<sup>th</sup> Street are in compliance with the municipal code.

*Item 3.* A petition objecting to the proposed name change was submitted.

The petition containing 35 signatures is included with this staff report.

*Item 4.* Changing a street name requires substantial paperwork and cost for affected businesses and residents.

*Item 5.* Airport Way can be renamed instead of E Airport Road

It is possible to rename Airport Way rather than E Airport Road. There are issues that arise with this renaming proposal. The airport itself is addressed as Airport Way in all Federal Aviation Administration registrations. Renaming Airport Way may impact federal grants and publications, such as the Aeronautical Information Manual. There are currently seven businesses which are addressed on Airport Way. There are 22 properties with an E Airport Road address. Changing either name will impact businesses. In addition, per the airport manager, aviation related businesses will and do use Airport Way as a temporary base of operations and there are air and ground operations which need to find the airport on a daily basis.

This is testimony provided to the city council. There is no staff response to this testimony.

The relevant minutes of the April 13, 2026 meeting are also attached to this staff report for reference.

Research surrounding the E Airport Road name issue has revealed that E Airport Road is dedicated right of way between Highway 395 and S Ott Road. However, E Airport Road also exists as an undedicated street east of S Ott Road. There is one house east of Ott Road which will continue to have an E Airport Road address (2505 E Airport Road) should the city council change the name. This house is within the Stanfield zip code rather than the Hermiston zip code. It lies outside the city street right of way, city limits, and city urban growth boundary. The city council has no jurisdiction to alter this street name. Thus there will continue to be a section of E Airport Road even following renaming of the city section. A map displaying all properties with an E Airport Road address is attached. Site visitation indicates that 2505 has a mail box located on S Ott Road and the section of E Airport Road east of S Ott Road is signed as a private road with no public access.

All other testimony provided in writing to the city council to date is included with this report.

The procedure for renaming of public streets is governed by ORS 227.120 and requires notice of public hearing be published in the local newspaper. The procedures are as follows:

**227.120 Procedure and approval for renaming streets.** Within six miles of the limits of any city, the commission, if there is one, or if no such commission legally exists, then the city engineer, shall recommend to the city council the renaming of any existing street, highway or road, other than a county road or state highway, if in the judgment of the commission, or if no such commission legally exists, then in the judgment of the city engineer, such renaming is in the best interest of the city and the six mile area. Upon receiving such recommendation the council shall afford persons particularly interested, and the general public, an opportunity to be heard, at a time and place to be specified in a notice of hearing published in a newspaper of general circulation within the municipality and the six mile area not less than once within the week prior to the week within which the hearing is to be held. After such opportunity for hearing has been afforded, the city council by ordinance shall rename the street or highway in accordance with the recommendation or by resolution shall reject the recommendation. A certified copy of each such ordinance shall be filed for record with the county clerk or recorder, and a like copy shall be filed with the county assessor and county surveyor. The county surveyor shall enter the new names of such streets and roads in red ink on the county surveyor's copy of any filed plat and tracing thereof which may be affected, together with appropriate notations concerning the same. The original plat may not be corrected or changed after it is recorded with the county clerk.

### **Tie-In to Council Goals**

The hearing is a result of the council motion on February 23, 2026.

### **Fiscal Information**

The city will incur minimal expenses in amending signage.

### **Alternatives and Recommendation**

#### Alternatives

Under state law, if a street name change is proposed, following a hearing the city council shall either adopt an ordinance amending the street name or adopt a resolution rejecting the name change.

The city council should make a decision on changing the name from E Airport Road to E Veterans Avenue. Based upon the council decision staff will either:

- Prepare an ordinance for adoption on May 26 changing the name from E Airport Road to E Veterans Ave
- Prepare a resolution for adoption on May 26 retaining the E Airport Road name

#### Recommended Action/Motion

Staff does not have a recommendation in this matter.

#### **Submitted By:**

Clinton Spencer, Planning Director