



To Whom It May Concern:

As the State of Oregon's economic development agency, Business Oregon regularly engages with national and international companies considering the state for expansion or relocation projects. The agency's staff work with these companies and local partners to find sites that will serve industry needs and provide economic development opportunities for the communities in which they land. Through this work, Business Oregon has come to understand development trends and site requirements for a wide variety of industries.

Data center growth in the Columbia Gorge region has experienced triple-digit growth in employment and wages over the past several years. Business Oregon, through its work with industry representatives and community partners, is aware of future data center projects in the region – both planned and proposed – which indicate that the industry's growth trend is likely to continue into the foreseeable future. These projects will require large industrial sites with reasonable proximity to substantial sources of power and water. Sites that meet these criteria have grown increasingly rare across the state, and Eastern Oregon is no exception.

Business Oregon's regional development staff has read the City of Hermiston's Economic Opportunities Analysis and finds that its conclusions and recommendations for needed employment lands are realistic. Business Oregon supports the city's request for an urban growth boundary expansion.

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