



Wallowa County Industrial Lands

Wallowa County has a shortage of marketable industrial land for new and expanding businesses. When the Wallowa Forest Products mill in Wallowa shut down in 2007, the Lower Valley Economic Development Team, the City of Wallowa, Wallowa County, and the Northeast Economic Revitalization Team began investigating opportunities for meeting the county's industrial land needs.

With assistance from the ERT, the City of Wallowa sent a letter of intent to purchase a 57 acre former mill site located inside the city's urban growth boundary. The site has been a brownfield (where real or perceived environmental contamination hinders reuse or redevelopment) since the 1960s. Oregon Economic and Community Development Department funded an appraisal to determine the site's value. The Division of State lands completed a wetlands determination to determine where redevelopment of the site would be impacted by wetlands. The Department of Environmental Quality has committed to performing Phase I and II environmental assessments to assist with environmental liability management. Oregon Parks and Recreation is working with the city on a grant that will allow the city to purchase parts of the site for public use, including baseball fields, soccer fields, and a pathway along the Wallowa River that could eventually connect to the proposed Nez Perce Interpretive Center. The City plans on certifying the site as Industrial Ready under the state's industrial land certification program pending the acceptance of their purchase offer.

In addition, the Department of Land Conservation and Development has given Wallowa County a regional Goal 9 Economic Opportunities Analysis grant to determine industrial and commercial land needs for the four cities in Wallowa County. The outcome of the analysis will be the identification of existing supply and the potential need for additional employment lands to meet the county's economic development needs for the next 20 to 50 years.

According to Wallowa Mayor Ron Gay, "the outcome of these projects are absolutely critical to the City of Wallowa, the Wallowa School District, and Wallowa County. We greatly appreciate the assistance we have received from the Northeast ERT".