



Oregon

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RE: Pacific City State Airport – Hazard Risk Overview

The Pacific City State Airport (Airport) is located in unincorporated Tillamook County and operated by the Oregon Department of Aviation (ODAV). The Airport is cherished by the recreational flying community. It provides access for commerce and tourism and is an important connection to the National Airspace System for medical transport flights and resiliency. The Airport's safety and liability have been called into question on numerous occasions after decades of encroachment. New hazardous obstructions continue to be built.

Under Oregon rules (OAR 660-013-0070 and 0080), local governments must create a special safety zone around airports. This zone protects airspace boundaries known as "imaginary surfaces" which were defined in 1983 under OAR 738-070-0120, from buildings, trees, and other tall objects. Currently, state rules require the "primary surface" to be 250 feet wide, but the County's local ordinance (the PAO zone) lists it as only 200 feet wide.

In addition, state law (ORS 836.610(1)) requires the County to enforce airport compatibility rules for Public Use Airports. These rules include:

- **Runway Protection Zones (RPZ):** Banning new homes and uses of public assembly.
- **High-Noise Areas:** Restricting certain land uses (listed in Exhibit 5*) within noise boundaries established under OAR 340, division 35.

Per ORS 836.610(1), the County must conduct a full review of its airport overlay zone to bring the local rules into alignment with state law.

ODAV and the State Aviation Board had considerable discussion in the 2010s over selling the Airport. An appraisal was completed in 2017 which determined the market value of the Airport was \$10, with other consideration that the purchaser maintain the Airport for public use. The Airport remained with ODAV, yet new obstructions continued to be permitted by the County. Several new multi-story residences and other hazards have been constructed in navigable-use airspace and safety areas intended to remain free of objects in the event of runway excursions.

While the Airport needs maintenance and improvements, ODAV has repeatedly asked the County to update their Overlay Zone to protect the airport by preventing further hazardous obstructions from being built. The issue was discussed with the community in June 2024. The County Board of Commissioners asked for additional information in April 2025 which was provided by ODAV in May 2025. Though ODAV continued to ask to meet about this issue, the next meeting wasn't until July 2026 where the County stated they had no intention of updating their Overlay Zone to meet state law.

*Oregon Department of Aviation's mission is to provide infrastructure, financial resources,
and expertise to ensure a safe and efficient air transport system*