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STANFIELD

## Road Diet

Stanfield considers options to slim down Highway 395 through community



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

The Oregon Department of Transportation is considering implementing a "road diet" plan to reduce traffic speeds through downtown Stanfield.

By JADE MCDOWELL  
East Oregonian

**S**TANFIELD — Stanfield might put Highway 395 on a diet, but it has nothing to do with counting calories. The "road diet" is a solution the Oregon Department of Transportation has begun implementing for some cities where a major highway sends traffic speeding through the center of town. To force more drivers to go the speed limit, the department narrows down the lanes of travel — in Stanfield's case, from five lanes to three. ODOT is planning a major repaving project along Highway 395 through downtown Stanfield, adding traffic-calming features such as stamped concrete crosswalks, wheel chair ramps and "bulb-outs" extending the sidewalk further into intersections, in an effort to signal to drivers that they are crossing through a town and should slow down accordingly. "A common problem, as you guys are aware of, is when you have a five-lane highway through a town people speed," ODOT engineer Bryan Strasser told the Stanfield City Council during a presentation on Tuesday. "When we think of traffic calming, we think of things that signal to

the driver that they can't just go ripping down the highway." He told the council he believed Stanfield would benefit from a road diet as well, keeping the center turn lane but going down from two lanes of travel on either side to just one in each direction. The city council was on board with the other improvements, but wanted more information and input from the public before committing to the road diet part of the plan. Strasser said he was skeptical of the road diet method at first, but after seeing it work in Milton-Freewater he was a fan. ODOT worked with Milton-Freewater last summer to take the section of Highway 11 that makes up South Main Street from two lanes in each direction to one lane in each direction plus a center turn lane. The city turned the extra space

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**Inside**

The Stanfield city council was presented with options for raising water rates on Tuesday, but decided to delay their decision until after a new city manager is hired. See Page A3

## Tensions linger in Salem

GOP threatens to stop proceedings over landmark environmental policy

By CLAIRE WITHYCOMBE, AUBREY WIEBER AND MARK MILLER  
Oregon Capital Bureau

SALEM — The Oregon Legislature is mere days away from having to close up shop. But uncertainty has permeated the Capitol for the past couple of days as Senate Republicans threaten to stop proceedings over a landmark environmental policy. If the 11 Republican senators decide not to show Thursday morning, when a bill to limit the state's industrial polluters is up for a vote, that would mean the Senate won't

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## Umatilla, Morrow counties seek own workforce group

By PHIL WRIGHT  
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Umatilla and Morrow counties are joining forces to ask the state to set up a workforce development board covering only the two counties. The state in 2015 grouped Umatilla, Morrow plus six more counties in Eastern Oregon into one regional workforce board. Umatilla County Commissioner George Murdock said the configuration is the problem. "Right now, our regional workforce board covers a third of Oregon," he said, and that wide swath from Washington to Nevada fails to reflect the issues unique to Umatilla and Morrow counties. During the board of commissioners meeting on Wednesday, he said the county's representatives grow so frustrated they resign from the workforce board. The state has nine regional workforce boards. While the Eastern Oregon Works covers eight counties, the



Murdock

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## Council approves contentious airport lease language

By ANTONIO SIERRA  
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — After discussing the Eastern Oregon Regional Airport's past and present, the Pendleton City Council made three decisions that will affect its future. At a meeting Tuesday, the council voted to create new lease language for airport businesses, enter into a contract for an Unmanned Aerial Systems economic impact study, and sell off the city's interest in a piece of Airport Road industrial land. The council's decision ended months of public contention between airport business owners, who own their own buildings but must lease the land the buildings stand on from the city, and airport administration. The heart of the conflict involved the "reversionary clause," contract

language that allows the city to take ownership of buildings that are not removed at the end of a lease. The business community said the clause would devalue its investment and dissuade new entrepreneurs from setting up shop at the airport while airport officials said the clause was a necessary piece to comply with Federal Aviation Administration rules. The Pendleton Airport Commission eventually came up with compromise language — the reversionary clause would remain, but business owners could work around it and negotiate new leases with the city. Under the commission's proposal, all businesses could negotiate up to a maximum lease term of 50 years. To avoid reversion to the city



EO File Photo

At a meeting Tuesday, the Pendleton City Council made three decisions that will affect the future of Eastern Oregon Regional Airport. The council voted to create new lease language for airport businesses, enter into a contract for an Unmanned Aerial Systems economic impact study, and sell off the city's interest in a piece of Airport Road industrial land.

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