

Growing Together LLC
301 Warehouse St.
Caldwell, ID 83605



Date: September 26, 2025

Canyon County Development Services /
Board of County Commissioners
111 N. 11th Avenue, Suite 310
Caldwell, ID 83605

Re: Caldwell Area of Impact (AOI)

Dear Commissioners,

We respectfully urge the Board to reduce Caldwell's Area of Impact by removing the 2,400 acres of farmland between Linden, Middleton, and Lincoln Roads north to the AOI line.

Idaho Code §67-6526(4)(b) states clearly: "An area of impact shall not exceed the areas that are very likely to be annexed to the city within the next five (5) years." No evidence in Caldwell's submission demonstrates that annexation of these farmlands is imminent. Instead, the record shows these lands are actively farmed, served by irrigation districts, and located at the outer edge of city serviceability — conditions inconsistent with near-term annexation.

State law also requires that agricultural lands be protected as part of the comprehensive planning process (Idaho Code §67-6508(e)). Canyon County's own 2030 Comprehensive Plan (Goal LU-3) directs that "prime agricultural soils and operations shall be preserved and protected from encroachment by non-agricultural uses."

The farmlands identified are predominantly Class II and III soils — among the most productive in the Treasure Valley. Once converted to residential subdivisions, these soils can never be reclaimed for farming. Beyond their agronomic value, these operations sustain family farms, dairies, and employment that form the backbone of Canyon County's economy.

Equally important, sprawling development into farmland imposes significant public costs. Unlike farmland, which contributes more in property taxes than it demands in services, scattered subdivisions require new schools, fire stations, roads, and costly utility extensions. These expenses fall on all Canyon County taxpayers, while the loss of farmland erodes one of the region's most stable economic sectors.

Under both state law and established county zoning practice, the burden of proof lies with the applicant to demonstrate compliance with statutory criteria. In this case, Caldwell, as the proponent of the AOI boundary, is responsible for producing evidence that the lands in question are “very likely” to be annexed within five years. The record before the Board does not include any such compelling evidence. Absent proof of imminent annexation or serviceability, the statutory requirement is not satisfied, and the AOI must be drawn more narrowly to comply with Idaho law.

If Areas of Impact are instead drawn only around lands where development is planned and highly likely to be annexed — as the new state law requires — growth will be better directed inward, adjacent to, and as infill within cities, rather than fueling the rural sprawl that has historically occurred within overextended impact areas.

For these reasons, we recommend that the Board direct Caldwell to focus growth inward through infill and redevelopment, rather than outward at the expense of productive agricultural land. Removing the 2,400 acres in question from the AOI will ensure compliance with Idaho law and uphold the County’s long-standing commitment to farmland preservation. A recommended area for removal is included in the attached map and depicted in green.

We thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,



George Crookham
President, Growing Together

cc. Growing Together Advisory Board

Growing Together, LLC

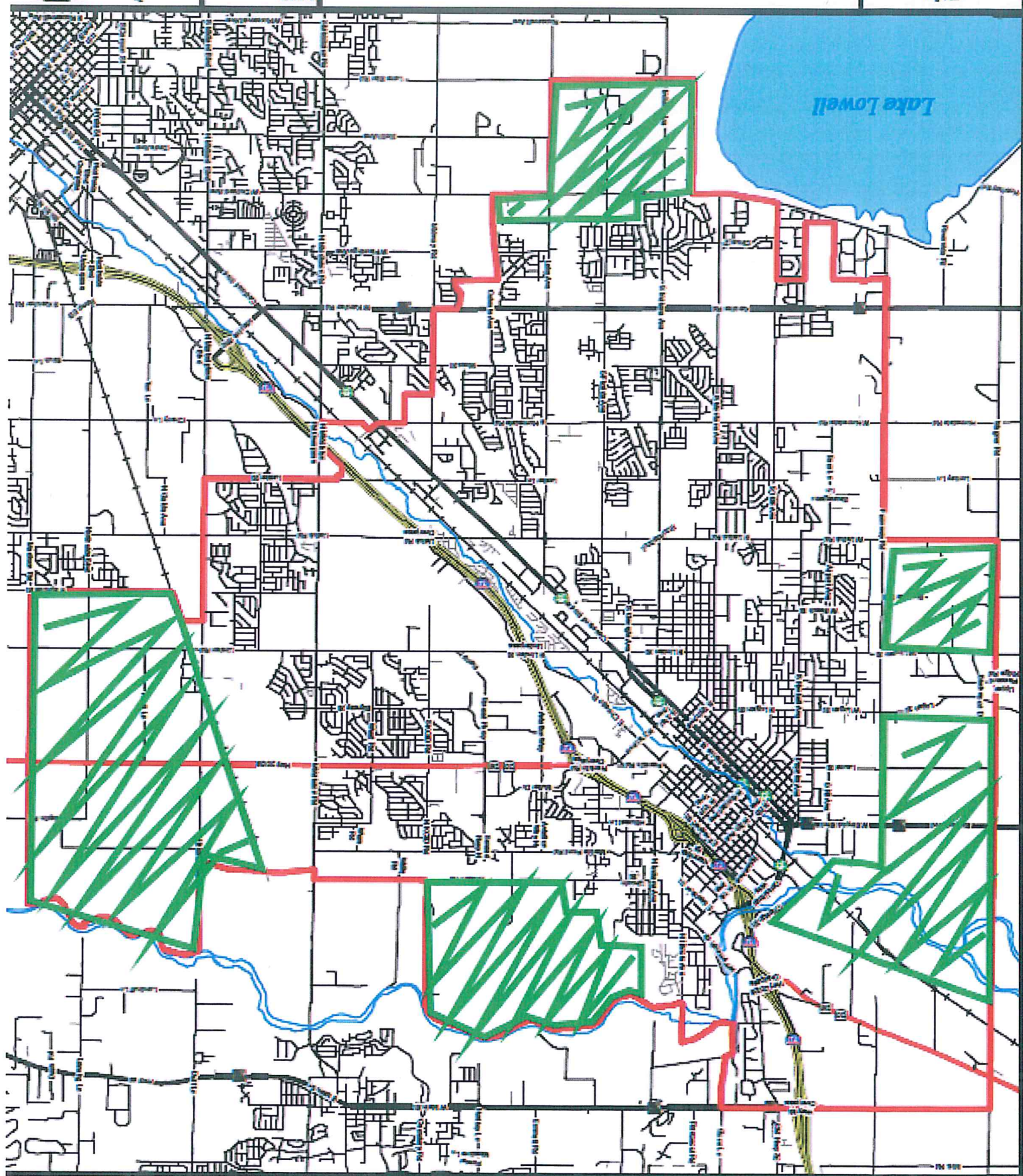
Mission Statement: To improve citizens' knowledge of local land use planning and to support good economic land use decisions.

Caldwell Impact Area

- Legend**
- Impact Area
 - Boise River
 - Road Type
 - State Hwy
 - US Hwy
 - Interstate
 - Major Road
 - Local Road
 - Private
 - Rail



Map of Caldwell, Idaho, showing the impact area. The map includes a legend, scale bar, and north arrow. The impact area is outlined in red and includes several green hatched areas. The map also shows the Boise River and various roads.



Caldwell Impact Area