

Growing Together LLC
 301 Warehouse St.
 Caldwell, ID 83605



Date: [Insert Date]

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

Re: Wilder AOI

Dear Commissioners,

Although Wilder has reduced its AOI, the proposal still includes approximately 1,500 acres of agricultural land. The city’s justification—that hops demand has declined—does not satisfy Idaho Code §67-6526, which requires AOIs to be based on areas 'very likely to be annexed within five years.' Speculation about crop markets is not evidence of imminent annexation.

Current scale of Wilder. The City of Wilder today covers only about 0.7 square miles (≈448 acres) of incorporated land. Adding 1,500 acres would more than triple its footprint. Under state law, the burden of proof lies with the city to show those lands can realistically be annexed and serviced within five years. The record before you provides no such evidence.

Fiscal and serviceability concerns. Farmland is not only a cultural heritage but also a fiscal asset: it supports jobs, exports, and contributes to the tax base while requiring minimal public services. By contrast, annexing 1,500 acres without phased, financed service plans risks overwhelming Wilder’s already limited utilities, safety, and community infrastructure.

To illustrate:

Scenario (5-yr)	Annexed Acres	New Dwellings	Added Population	Total Capital Cost (\$M)	Annual Service Cost (\$M)	Annual Revenue (\$M)	Annual Gap (\$M)	New Public Safety/ Healthcare Needs
Modest (150 ac @	150	195	535	23.7	0.64	0.48	-0.16	1 officer; 0–1 fire



2 du/ac)								
Moderate (375 ac @ 3.5 du/ac)	375	854	2,349	51.5	2.82	2.11	0.71	4 officers; 1 fire station; 1 clinic
Aggressive (600 ac @ 6 du/ac)	600	2,340	6,435	77.5	7.72	5.79	-1.93	12 officers; 1-2 fire stations; 1-2 clinics

Even under the 'modest' case (annexing just 10% of the AOI), Wilder would face \$23+ million in new capital costs and a recurring budget deficit. At the aggressive case, the city could need nearly \$78 million in new capital and face nearly a \$2 million annual shortfall, plus multiple new patrol officers, fire stations, and medical clinics. These demands are inconsistent with Wilder's current budgetary and staffing capacity, which today relies heavily on limited contracts and shared county services.

Healthcare and community services. Wilder currently has only a small outpatient clinic; hospitals are in Caldwell and Nampa, 10–16 miles away. Large-scale annexations would amplify unmet needs in healthcare, senior services, and community support that the city is not presently equipped to provide.

Conclusion. Idaho Code §67-6526 requires AOIs to include only those lands 'very likely to be annexed within five years.' Idaho Code §67-6508(e) and Canyon County's Comprehensive Plan (LU-3) further direct preservation of prime agricultural soils and active farmland. Absent proof of imminent annexation or funded service plans, Wilder's inclusion of these 1,500 acres fails the statutory test.

We therefore urge the Board to condense Wilder's AOI to parcels immediately adjacent to the city where annexation and utility service are realistic, and to remove the broad agricultural tracts that cannot be serviced within five years.

Respectfully,

George Crookham
President, Growing Together



Growing Together, LLC

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

cc. Growing Together Advisory Board

Footnotes

1. U.S. Census Bureau, Wilder City Profile – land area ≈ 0.7 sq mi (≈ 448 acres).
2. Idaho Code §67-6526, as amended 2024, requiring AOIs to include only areas 'very likely' to be annexed within five years.
3. Canyon County Comprehensive Plan (LU-3) – directive to preserve prime agricultural soils.
4. City of Wilder AOI letter (Aug. 8, 2025) citing hops-demand decline but no annexation/service plan.
5. Wilder Clinic (primary care); nearest hospitals West Valley Medical Center (Caldwell) and St. Luke's Nampa, 10–16 miles away.

