



Planning Department  
Office: (541) 766-6819  
4500 SW Research Way  
Corvallis, OR 97330  
cd.bentoncountyor.gov

Date Posted: April 28, 2026

Meeting Date: May 5, 2026 6:00pm

LU-25-066 & LU-25-067

Planning Commission Meeting

**Subject:** Supplemental information submitted post March 17, 2026

On March 17, 2026, at 6:00 PM, the Planning Commission convened to consider the Northside Christian Church proposal to establish a church at 4500 Powers Avenue NW. At that meeting, the Commission approved a continuance and initiated the "7-7-7" process pursuant to ORS 197.797.

The 7-7-7 rule is a specific procedural framework used in Oregon quasi-judicial land use hearings per ORS 197.797. As granted by Planning Commission on Tuesday March 17<sup>th</sup> meeting, the 7-7-7 process structured as follows:

- a. The First 7 Days period was for submitting new evidence or testimony that wasn't available or presented during the initial hearing to supplement facts in the record.
  1. **This period was closed on March 24, 2026**
- b. The Second 7 Days is for rebuttal by the applicant.
  1. **This period was closed on March 31, 2026**
- c. The Final 7 Days is for the applicant's final argument. During this period the applicant is allowed a final period to submit written arguments in support of their application. In addition, staff may make revisions to the staff report.
  1. **This period was closed on April 7, 2026**

The 21-day continuance period concluded on April 7, 2026, which coincided with a scheduled Planning Commission meeting. However, that meeting did not have a quorum. A subsequent meeting also lacked a quorum. The matter has been continued to the next available Planning Commission meeting, which will occur:

May 5, 2026, at 6:00 PM

The meeting will be held at:

4500 SW Research Way

Corvallis, OR

No additional public testimony will be accepted at the May 5, 2026, meeting. The Planning Commission will proceed with final deliberations only.

## BOZIGAR Shannon

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**From:** Kelly Rose <kkrose33@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 24, 2026 6:42 PM  
**To:** Benton Public Comment  
**Cc:** Joe  
**Subject:** RE: LU-25-067 (Conditional Use) & LU-25-066 (Parking Variance) Powers Ave, Albany  
**Attachments:** Opposition to LU-25-067 (Conditional Use) & LU-25-066 (Parking Variance) Powers Ave, Albany.pdf

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Formal Opposition and Memo of Concerns: LU-25-067 (Conditional Use) & LU-25-066 (Parking Variance) – Powers Avenue Variance Request

Dear Members of the Benton County Planning Commission,

Please find the attached memorandum outlining several critical concerns regarding the proposed development and variance request [File Number, if known] on Powers Avenue.

As residents and community members, we believe the current proposal presents significant risks that have not been adequately addressed in the initial filings. Our memo attached details several high-priority issues, including:

- **Public Safety & Infrastructure:** The inability of the narrow (19-foot) roadway to support high-intensity assembly and the resulting obstruction of emergency response vehicles.
- **Fiscal & Technical Oversights:** Significant omissions in the current cost estimates, particularly regarding utility relocation and the complex fire hydrant flushing system.
- **Legal Standing:** The failure of the applicant to meet the "Burden of Proof" required for a land-use variance.
- **Environmental Concerns:** The land use proposed fails to account for costs associated with laws and Benton County policies related to deforestation, drainage and run off concerns, and impacts to natural waterways.

We respectfully request that this memorandum be included in the official public record and provided to the Commissioners for their review prior to the upcoming hearing.

Thank you for your time and for your commitment to the safety and character of Benton County.

Sincerely,

Kelly Rose, PhD  
3771 NW Oak Grove Drive, Albany OR; 540-230-4813

## RE: LU-25-067 (Conditional Use) & LU-25-066 (Parking Variance)

### 1. Infrastructure & Utility Incompatibility

- **Absence of Municipal Sewer:** The RR-2 zone lacks public sewage infrastructure. Under Oregon land use standards, a 75,000+ sq. ft. high-occupancy facility is an "urban-scale" use. Permitting such a load on a private septic system poses an untenable risk of groundwater contamination for a neighborhood dependent on private wells.
- **Watershed Degradation:** Topographical mapping confirms that both treated effluent and surface runoff (oil, chemicals, and silt) follow a direct gravity path into the stream on the property itself, and into the downhill pond and connected watershed. This creates a permanent environmental liability that cannot be mitigated in a rural setting.

### 2. Public Safety & Roadway Adequacy

- **The ~\$1 Million Estimate is Only a Fraction of the True Cost:** The proposed \$1 million budget for Powers Road is a dangerous underestimate. It ignores the massive financial burden of widening a road that is currently lined with mature trees, drainage ditches, and essential utility lines.

Specifically, the current ~\$1M estimate fails to mention costs related to:

- **Substandard Access & Public Safety Risk:** At only 19 feet wide, Powers Avenue cannot safely accommodate "peak-hour" surges from a 700+ seat sanctuary. The requested parking variance (LU-25-066) will inevitably lead to illegal shoulder parking, creating physical obstructions that violate fire codes and block emergency response vehicles.
- **Critical Fire Infrastructure Oversight:** The drainage ditches along Powers are not merely for runoff; they are essential for the fire department's hydrant flushing system. Relocating this network requires a costly, complex re-engineering of the entire western-end fire safety infrastructure.
- **Major Intersection & Civil Requirements:** The Powers/Scenic intersection requires a total structural reconstruction—not a simple "enhancement"—to handle the projected traffic volume. This, combined with full-scale paving and mandatory landowner recompensation, represents a massive unfunded mandate.

- **Uncounted Utility Relocation Costs:** The budget fails to account for the expensive relocation of overhead power and cable lines that would be necessitated by the expansion of Powers Avenue.
- **Environmental & Site Impact:** The project requires extensive tree removal and a complete overhaul of the existing landscape to accommodate widened lanes and relocated utilities, costs which remain largely unaddressed in the current estimate.

This project cannot be completed for the current estimate. Prior to approval, it would be prudent to obtain a revised, transparent budget that reflects the total scope of work.

### 3. Irreversible Environmental & Property Impacts

- **Loss of Natural Buffers:** The development requires the clear-cutting of established trees and the destruction of a historical barn. These are "non-renewable" rural assets that define the RR-2 character and provide essential carbon sequestration and sound buffering.
- **Stormwater Surge:** Replacing 19 acres of permeable field with 5 acres of asphalt creates massive "point-source" runoff. Without municipal storm drains, this surge will erode rural road shoulders and flood neighboring properties.
- **Conflict with Forest Conservation Zones:** In rural parts of Benton County, tree management is regulated to support forest uses and reduce wildfire risk, necessitating compliance with designated, approved, or conditional uses. Widening of Powers would require removal of significant established trees on personal property, potentially in conflict with Benton County tree management policies.

### 4. Failure to Meet "Burden of Proof" for Variance

- **Lack of Property-Based Hardship:** To qualify for a variance, the applicant must demonstrate a unique hardship inherent to the physical characteristics of the land (e.g., topography or lot shape). In this case, no such physical hardship exists. The applicant is instead requesting a variance to accommodate a specific "high-intensity" business model that is simply too large for the site.
- **Self-Created Hardship:** The "hardship" here is entirely self-created. The applicant is proposing a 700+ seat facility and a gymnasium on a parcel that cannot support the required parking and safety infrastructure. Under [City/County] Code, a variance

cannot be granted to solve a problem created by the applicant's own design choices or desire for over-development.

- **Alternative Uses Exist:** The burden of proof requires the applicant to show that the land cannot be used for *any* permitted purpose without the variance. Because the land could be developed for lower-intensity uses, such as it is zoned for multi-acre housing, that *do* meet the code, the request for a variance fails the legal "necessity" test.
- **Why Pave Rural Land When Urban Alternatives Exist?** It is financially, logically and environmentally unsound to grant a variance for a rural site when Albany and Corvallis are home to multiple vacant facilities already designed to adapt and fulfill this purpose. Unlike the proposed Powers Avenue site, these urban locations are already zoned for large-scale use and equipped with essential infrastructure, including sewer systems, roadways, and high-capacity parking. We should prioritize the revitalization of empty commercial sites, like the former garden center in North Albany, rather than forcing a high-density development into a rural area that cannot support it.
- **Financial Admission:** The applicant has formally objected to the \$1.1 million road improvement mandate. Legally, if an applicant cannot provide the infrastructure required to make a site safe, the permit must be denied.

## BOZIGAR Shannon

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**From:** Kyle Anderson <kanderson455@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 24, 2026 2:16 PM  
**To:** Benton Public Comment  
**Subject:** Public Comment for LU 25-66 & 67  
**Attachments:** Chart Family Opposition letter.docx; Anderson County Statement.docx

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Good afternoon,  
Please see attached.

This is our official comment that we would like submitted for public record in regards to LU 25-66 in regards to Northside Church's requests.  
These letters represent the Andersons (4696 NW Powers Ave) and the Charts (4654 NW Powers Ave).

Please kindly reply to this email so we ensure that the documents are received without issue.

Thank you

Kyle Anderson

Good day to all,

Thank you to the Benton County Planning commission for taking the time to read our very valid concerns for a proposed mega church campus just east of our property (4696 NW Powers Ave).

I would like to start by saying we are absolutely against this proposal and even the idea of anything like it. I will be outlining our concerns and why we hope your vote is a complete no to the entire idea/project.

A mega church campus would ruin and devastate the country feel of the neighborhood and adjacent streets/businesses. We live outside of city limits and any urban growth boundary. We moved to the area nearly 9 years ago to escape the noise, traffic, and light pollution of a city. We found our home where we believed we were safe to raise our family, have our hobby farm, and escaped all the things listed. The thought of a mega church campus that is larger than a Coastal Farm store being developed on the property considered, and the supposition of it not ruining the "Country feel" is laughable. It would absolutely destroy the feeling and be an absolute eye sore, both the buildings and the huge (5+acre????) parking lot required to accommodate this large Mega Church Campus. None of these renderings or discussions of this campus keep the country feel intact.

Environmental impacts are another great concern. Beginning with light pollution. We moved to this area to escape various aspects of city life. To be able to wake up early or stay up late and look at the stars, or listen to wildlife, is one of the many reasons we worked hard to afford to move to this area. To look out at night and see a massive parking lot full of lights, increases the light pollution to our area, and would be devastating to us as the immediate neighbors. Now to address noise. The amount of traffic from this mega church campus alone would exponentially increase road noise, not just from a simple "Sunday service" that the church tried to pedal to you all during the meeting. With a potential daycare in the proposal and a 10-year construction plan, daily traffic volume and noise will obviously increase. Noise from the proposed amphitheater, playground, pickleball court, and services would also substantially increase noise in our little valley where sound echoes off the hills and trees. Now add all of this up and imagine the church peddling the idea that wildlife would not be affected by these changes to the natural environment. Anyone can realize that not only will we all be severely impacted, but our local wildlife will be scared away, driven out of the area and not able to use their normal routes to travel. Instead of a field, or even 8-10 homes on the property, they will be met with a Commercial size building larger than Coastal Farms, and a massive parking lot. What a shame it would be to them, as wildlife, if this gets approved.

Now to my passionate take on this. Road improvements to Powers Ave.

It is no secret that Powers Ave needs some improvements. As a resident and taxpayer of Benton County, I understand that Powers Ave is not a high priority to the County. Evidence of this comes from multiple calls I have made between 2018 and 2019 to have the county public works department clean out the ditches in front of our properties (myself and our neighbors). These ditches carry water year-round from the hills that surround us and carry the water down to the backside of the property concerning the proposal in question. Every winter these ditches flood over into the road and our driveways, due to the lack of maintenance and sediment build up. After multiple attempts to have this addressed in 2018 and 2019, I gave up on the county doing anything about it and we watch the ditch spill over into the road and on our driveways.

Now, the proposed road improvements in our opinion, should be covered financially, solely by the Church, regardless of the cost, as this roadway is adequate for residential purposes, but cannot in any reality funnel hundreds of cars, in addition to its usual traffic and pedestrian use within less than four hours on a weekly basis. The proposal by the county, which I believe would be adequate, to accommodate the Mega church's increased traffic and safety problems is creative and addresses many issues. Let me be clear though, no taxpayer funding should be used to accommodate this proposal. Northside Church should have to pay for all road improvements and upgrades to ALL of Powers Ave. This Mega-Church (which is an appropriate assessment considering only two percent of Oregon churches are larger than Northside Church) is proposing bringing all of their demands with them, which include massive traffic increases and safety concerns, but not provide for necessary improvements of the infrastructure they will be using is laughable and has become the neighborhood joke in the short week since the public hearing. We as taxpayers should not bear the burden of the cost of upgrades Powers Ave for their use.

The idea discussed in the meeting, of the road needing improvements and significant widening, included discussion around the county having to go to property owners and that we may lose some of our property. I can say right now (and know the feelings of our neighbors on this issue as well), if the county comes to me asking for some of my road-front property, which is lined with mature fruit trees and our lovely, ornate mailbox and residence sign, the answer will be an absolute NO. My family will go as far as seeking legal council to fight and keep every inch of our property, the hand-built fence that lines it, and the fruit trees that feed us annually, which are a lovely cost saving measure against ever increasing food costs.

Thankfully, our neighbors share the same thoughts and concerns. Listening to the meeting online, Commissioners making comments of "when this happens" and not "if," put us on

alert that this is a formality, and the planning committee already has decided on the outcome of this proposal. Many of our neighbors also noticed that, and it was extremely concerning.

It is our hope that the Planning commission votes to vehemently oppose both proposed revisions because this congregation is not welcome to build their project in our neighborhood. This is not just a simple, small church. This is a Mega Church Campus that has a main building that is bigger than a Coastal Farm Store and larger than the Oak Grove Elementary gym (which we know as our children attend that school). Please take our concerns into consideration when you deliberate and vote on these matters

Respectfully,

Kyle & Kate Anderson

4696 NW Powers Ave

Albany, OR 97321

Attn: Benton County Community Development Dept.

To: James Wright

Regarding: LU-25-067

Dear Benton County Planning Commission,

We are writing as the direct neighbors at 4654 NW Powers Avenue to formally oppose the proposed permit for the mega Northside Church campus planned just east of our property at 4500 Powers Avenue.

First, we would like to thank the Commission for taking the time to carefully review community input and consider the very real concerns being raised. We would also like to express our strong agreement for the letter submitted by Kate and Kyle Anderson, which clearly and thoroughly outlines many of the concerns we share. Their comments reflect the realities of living in this area and as residents of this neighborhood for over 30 years, we echo the points they made in their letter.

We would like to specifically highlight an issue not fully emphasized elsewhere: water runoff and drainage. As noted in Kyle Anderson's letter, the existing roadside ditches along Powers Avenue already overflow during the winter and heavy rains due to lack of maintenance and sediment buildup. Water frequently spills onto the road and into our driveway. As a result, we have had to repeatedly add gravel to maintain access. This past year, the runoff issues described in his letter directly contributed to flooding on our property, including in our garage and our chicken feed barn. Any additional development—particularly one of this magnitude—would only exacerbate these drainage problems and create further risk to our property and others nearby.

Also, to address the possible acquisition of part of our frontage for road widening, I strongly oppose this as we too have mature fruit trees and established frontage improvements that are integral to our use and enjoyment of our property. We state unequivocally that we do not consent to the dedication, sale, or taking of any portion of our road-front property for the benefit of this proposed development. Any attempt to require or compel such acquisition would be strongly opposed. We are fully prepared to assert and defend our property rights through all available legal means, including retaining legal counsel and pursuing formal action if necessary.

The frontage in question is not surplus land—it is actively used, maintained, and materially valuable to our household, including as a source of food production. The loss of any portion of this property would constitute a direct and unacceptable impact. We understand that other neighboring property owners, besides us and the Anderson's share this position, which further underscores the significant barriers and conflicts associated with any road expansion tied to this proposal.

We do not feel the need to repeat all that the Andersons wrote in their letter, but we want to emphasize that we agree with everything they have said. Additionally, in the recent hearing, we heard from a few in favor of the proposal. We would like to point out that none of those who spoke actually live on Powers Avenue, and nearly all who spoke were members of the church. We did not hear from anyone in support who both lives on Powers Avenue and is not affiliated with the church. We ask that you please take this into consideration.

For all of these reasons, we respectfully request that you vote to deny this proposal in its entirety.

Thank you again for your time, attention, and consideration of our concerns.

Sincerely,

Stacey & Lance Chart  
4654 NW Powers Avenue, Albany, OR 97321

## BOZIGAR Shannon

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**From:** Kevin Dugan <fotophreak02@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 23, 2026 12:35 PM  
**To:** Benton Public Comment  
**Subject:** Northside Christian Church

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I wish to weigh in on the potential development of a large church on Powers Road in North Albany. My wife and I have lived in North Albany and consequently Benton County since 1998 and have watched it grow into a glut of overdeveloped housing tracts that have ruined the rural feel of our area. Excessive traffic, noise and light pollution are as discouraging as ever. The addition of a giant church in a rural setting is against everything we believed we were escaping by living out on the edge of the urban boundary of Albany. No. No. No!

We do not need 700 more cars on Scenic Drive no matter what day, part of which we walk on up to 4 times a week, including Sundays. We do not need a giant gymnasium located out here, there are plenty of gyms and health clubs in Albany. We do not need a church that will bleed its parishioners of money and fatten the wallet of the property owner. We would not attend. We do not need to witness someone taking advantage of a giant tax break on land that is not zoned for such purposes. The clearing of land in North Albany has ruined habitat for pheasant, foxes, quail, deer, coyotes, rabbits and countless other voiceless animals that will be displaced by yet another blot on the landscape covered with asphalt. And by the way, what will become of the sewage and wastewater generated by this monstrosity?? Where will that come from and where will it go?

Just because they are "good christian people" doesn't mean they won't make things worse out here by driving through both directions. More cars, more noise, more roadkill, more danger to the folks on Powers who had no intent of living next to a mega-church and having their road ruined, their property taken for widening and then overrun by people they don't know and don't want to know. 700 car doors slamming, lighted parking, drainage and runoff to go where?

Wake up and smell the opportunists! There are likely plenty of empty buildings in Albany or Corvallis where a new church could be located and the faithful could go congregate, like the old garden center on Hickory Drive in North Albany. Go where the zoning is appropriate.

Thanks for voting this down. Thanks for sticking to the land use and zoning RULES regarding this distasteful and inconsiderate idea. I look forward to having this debate end quietly.

Am I a NIMBY? Hell yes.

Kevin Dugan  
1934 NW Whitecliff Drive  
Albany

## BOZIGAR Shannon

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**From:** Cary Hoffer <caryhoffer@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 23, 2026 9:46 AM  
**To:** Benton Public Comment  
**Cc:** caryhoffer@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** opposed to Proposed Action: LU-25-067: CUP – Church and Proposed Action: LU-25-066: CUP – parking variance.

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Good morning/afternoon,

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposal to allow a church at 4500 Powers here in North Albany.

Having a facility of this massive size:

- 1) 75,771 square feet of buildings-- = 1.7 ACRES
- 2) Parking for the required attendance 736 vehicles = 5 acres
- 3) This does not even include driveways, sidewalks, etc. which will easily consume another 2 acres.
- 4) Traffic along Powers would be increased exponentially as would the likelihood of accidents for both people as well as wildlife.

Over 9 acres that is buildings and/or paved over would have a severe impact on the natural beauty of the area (Deer, rabbits, squirrels, eagles with an eagle nest less than ½ mile away), biking, walking, running, with and without our dogs.



A) Current lot-



B) Proposed mega-church

C) Comparison between existing 20 acre parcel with 10 homes (RR2) NOTE- this is located near the proposed site



There is no doubt that this would greatly change the of area.

I urge you to not allow this to go forward.

Best

Cary Hoffer  
 5218 NW Dumbeck Ave  
 Albany, 97321

## BOZIGAR Shannon

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**From:** Laci Betts <lacibetts@icloud.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 23, 2026 9:25 AM  
**To:** Benton Public Comment  
**Subject:** Re: Proposed building at 4500 Powers Drive from concerned local residents

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**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

We are writing to you as concerned residents regarding the proposal for a mega church at 4500 Powers Drive in North Albany. We have been residents on NW Scenic Drive for 18 years and have a clear view of the property in question. Our primary concerns are the following:

- 1) Widening Powers Drive: There was discussion at the meeting regarding widening Powers Drive to accommodate this industrial scale facility.
  1. the widening of the road to accommodate traffic would potentially reduce the property square footage of residents on Powers Drive.
  2. Oak Grove Drive is just as narrow and precarious as Powers Drive and has just as many pedestrians, bicyclists, and wildlife. It is one of only two roads that can be used to access Powers Drive. It would also need to be widened to accommodate traffic for a mega church. We assume that the church would need to fund those costs as well.
  
- 2) Traffic volume: There was mention from county staff that over 700 parking spaces would be required (different than the applicant's filing).
  1. If the church were to reach this upper capacity (using all spaces on a Sunday morning) that would be 700 inbound cars and then 700 outbound cars along Powers, and then Scenic Drive or Oak Grove Drive.
  2. It is safe to assume that there will be other mid-week services at this location (Bible studies, youth group, special events, etc) and it seems there is already investigation into the possibility of a childcare facility onsite. All resulting in more traffic.

This is a rural community that cannot withstand such additional traffic. There has already been a significant uptick in the traffic in this part of North Albany and additional cars greatly increase the possibility of accidents involving local residents and wildlife.
  
- 3) Road maintenance taxes: It is our understanding that houses of worship in Oregon do not pay city or county taxes to cover road maintenance. If true, why should the residents of North Albany be on the hook to pay for future road maintenance associated with such a significant increase in traffic. We willing pay our taxes for county maintenance on the roads that we use in North Albany. This church would not.

4) As daily pedestrians in North Albany we have watched the church attendees drive to their current worship location of Oak Grove School.

- It appears that a majority of these cars are coming down Gibson Hill Road or the south end of Scenic Drive (south of the intersection with Gibson Hill Road). This shows that these are not local community residents. According to Lifeway Research website, most congregants live 5-10 miles from their church. This church isn't part of this community. The intention is to come in and acquire one of the only green spaces left in that area and build an huge structure.
- The church has stated that it will attempt to have its building align with the aesthetic of the community - but the aesthetic of the community is green space, acreage, trees, rural, wildlife. It is not gymnasiums and pavement. There is simply no way to make this fit in this rural community.

5) Zoning: The property at 4500 Powers Drive is zoned RR-2. While a church could be an allowable structure in this zoning, a gymnasium (which we understand to be the proposed first phase) would not be an allowable structure.

We strongly request that Benton County Planning Board reject this request for building a mega church in 4500 Powers Drive as it does not align with this rural community, would pose traffic, pedestrian and wildlife hazards and surely increase road maintenance requirements/costs in this area.

Thank you for your time.

Curt and Laci Betts  
3490 NW Scenic Drive

## BOZIGAR Shannon

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**From:** Cynthia Petrovich <cpetrovich@me.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 23, 2026 12:02 AM  
**To:** Benton Public Comment  
**Subject:** Do NOT ALLOW Proposed Action: LU-25-067: CUP – Church and Proposed Action: LU-25-066: CUP – parking variance.

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Please do NOT ALLOW Proposed Action: LU-25-067: CUP – Church and Proposed Action: LU-25-066: CUP – parking variance. This megachurch does NOT belong in this rural, residential neighborhood.

Cynthia Petrovich  
2515 NW Skyline Ter  
Albany, OR 97321

## BOZIGAR Shannon

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**From:** Elizabeth Limmer <lizard1927@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 22, 2026 11:56 AM  
**To:** Benton Public Comment  
**Subject:** Proposed Action LU-25-067

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### **Proposed Action: LU-25-067: CUP Church / LU-25-066: Parking Standards**

March 22, 2026

The Arrow Family  
4409 NW Powers Ave  
Albany, OR 97321

To the Benton County Commissioners,

I am writing in opposition of the conditional use permit for Northside Church at 4500 Powers Ave in North Albany. We live directly across the street from the property and feel strongly that the current development plans would negatively impact our entire neighborhood.

I attended the public hearing meeting on March 17th via zoom and listened to the entirety of the meeting. We share many of the same concerns as our neighbors that spoke up in opposition of this conditional use permit.

Our family walks our dog on Powers Ave nearly every day and our young kids wait for their school bus at the bottom of our driveway. Many of our neighbors use the road for walking and biking as well. The church has planned to have a daycare operating 5 days per week, a gymnasium, a large sanctuary as well as a playground and pickleball courts. During the public hearing, the church tried to emphasize that the traffic changes would be limited to Sundays. I disagree that the building of their large campus would only impact traffic on Sundays. There would be an influx of cars every morning and evening during the week for the daycare as well as for any activities that are happening in the gymnasium and church. My understanding from listening to the public hearing is that the road would likely need to be widened and improved as a condition of the approval of the permit. While widening the road would improve our experience walking on our road, Powers Ave has a lot of trees lining the road and having to remove them to widen the road would take away some of the privacy that we all have from the road. It would change the feel of our neighborhood dramatically. It would no longer feel like a rural residential road.

We believe that the building of this church campus will impact the character of the surrounding area. As a couple of our neighbors expressed during the public hearing, initially we weren't too phased when we heard a church was being built across the street. Northside church is currently using the gymnasium at Oak Grove Elementary School and we figured it would be a modest sized building that would only be used on Sundays. The current plans include a 18,900 sq ft gymnasium and a 54,709 sq ft main sanctuary building. To have 2 very large buildings and adequate parking would drastically change the character of our neighborhood. Presumably, Northside Church would not be building such large buildings if they didn't think they had the potential to grow their congregation significantly and expect to use the gymnasium regularly for activities. We are also concerned about the light pollution and negative impacts to the wildlife that uses that current property. These things would also change the character of our neighborhood.

Regarding the variance for the parking standards, there was a lot of great discussion about this during the public hearing. Over 700 parking spaces would be a huge eye sore for our neighborhood, but it does not seem like the proposed 269 spaces would be sufficient for a worship service that would seat 500-600 people. Extra cars parking along Powers Ave would be incredibly dangerous for the neighbors who would be driving, walking, or biking. There is a little bit of a blind hill right in front of the property and even if the road is widened, it would be unsafe to have overflow parking on the road.

Northside Church has several large events throughout the year including a Trunk or Treat which is incredibly well attended, and I think it is important to make sure there is adequate parking for these events as to not spill out onto Powers. The church has proposed only 98 spaces in Phase 1 and this is certainly not adequate parking for Sunday services. Oak Grove Elementary has a similar amount of parking spaces and every Sunday there are dozens of cars parked on the road.

This proposed project will have significant negative impacts on the character of our rural residential neighborhood, the wildlife, and the safety of our neighbors who enjoy recreating on our road. We ask that you please consider denying the conditional use permit and parking variance.

Thank you so much for your consideration,  
Liz Arrow

## **BOZIGAR Shannon**

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**From:** Cathy Coleman <82rcmc@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 22, 2026 10:41 AM  
**To:** Benton Public Comment  
**Subject:** Proposed Action LU-25-067-CUP

[You don't often get email from 82rcmc@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

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I humbly ask you to vote no on the proposed church at 4500 Powers Street in north Albany. That is a very poor use of that land, and from what I've read, Albany needs housing much more than a mega-church.

Thank you for your consideration.

Cathleen Coleman  
1846 Arroyo Ridge Dr.  
Albany 97321  
Sent from my iPad

## BOZIGAR Shannon

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**From:** Charlotte Campbell <charclick1@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 21, 2026 10:28 PM  
**To:** Benton Public Comment  
**Subject:** Proposal to build church 4500 Powers Rd, Albany

You don't often get email from charclick1@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Benton County Planning Commissioners:

I attended the meeting on March 17th, 2026, so wish to thank you all for giving this matter your time, and considering fully the concerns of everyone involved.

It appears quite unlikely that the acreage proposed for the Northside Church campus is suitable for building on. It is a wetland. It's surprising that the landowner, who said he lives and farms nearby is not aware of how the water table can fluctuate in this area known as Springhill. A neighbor on Scenic Drive built a home with county approval and within a couple of years water began to rise, causing the home to warp and crack. One of the worst possible outcomes of this project would be if this beautiful and important natural area was filled, built on, paved, and then abandoned. This would also be true if phase one were implemented and phase two could not be approved.

I'm also against widening Powers Road. It's working very well as it is to provide a lovely, quiet place to walk and bike, while keeping car traffic low and slow. The proposed "improvement" would actually not improve this.

Thank you for considering these additional concerns.

Charlotte Campbell  
3425 NW Pineview Pl  
Albany, OR

## BOZIGAR Shannon

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**From:** Shane Lyon <slyon1976@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 21, 2026 11:37 AM  
**To:** Benton Public Comment  
**Subject:** LU-25-067: CUP – Church and Proposed Action: LU-25-066: CUP – parking variance.

You don't often get email from slyon1976@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Writing to express my opposition to the country club/ events venue that is being billed as a church. To start, it's very cut and dry as to whether this project meets the criteria to be allowed. As Hasso Herring stated in his article:

One of the criteria for granting a conditional use permit is that “the proposed use does not seriously interfere with uses on adjacent property, with the character of the area, or with the purpose of the zone.”

Does a supermarket-size parking lot and assembly complex interfere with the “character” of this semi-rural area?

Not only does the sheer size change the character, but the amount of traffic and number of events and activities proposed is not fair to the people who paid a premium to live in a quiet rural area. Pickleball, concerts, bazaars, daycare center, gymnasium. This all tells you this is going to have constant traffic, that changes the character of the area and affects neighboring properties. I have enough problems getting out of my driveway with people rolling through the stop sign at powers she scenic.

If the primary purpose is for worship, why is a gymnasium the first priority?

They are already trying to get out of the road improvements that would be required, that's ridiculous. Please follow the criteria and deny this as it should be.

Thank you,  
Shane Lyon  
3590 NW Scenic Dr

## BOZIGAR Shannon

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**From:** Katja Horan <dattel67@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 21, 2026 8:03 AM  
**To:** Benton Public Comment  
**Subject:** No church on Powers, please!

[You don't often get email from dattel67@comcast.net. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To whom it may concern,

My name is Katja Horan and I live on 4795 NW Powers Ave. I attended the meeting on 3/17/2026, regarding the proposal of building a church campus on our road.

I am against building such a huge church on our road. The church claimed that services would be limited to weekends. However, this is the time that I am home (I am a full-time, special education teacher in Corvallis). I looked at the church's website, and services are not just limited to one service on Sunday mornings. There are weekday meetings, prayer groups, special occasions. Building this church on our street would take away everything we are looking for on the weekends.

I also don't see how so much traffic would not impact our area. There are stop signs on both ends of Powers. This amount of cars would cause such a huge backup and we, the residents, would have to plan to leave our houses accordingly.

The claim that all the buildings would be set back off the road and we would not see it really, is ludicrous. In addition, the noise pollution, light pollution, air pollution, will be insane.

We are also starting to have more young children in our area again. They are playing close to the road and feel safe. Increase in traffic would not allow that anymore.

Also, according to their website, this church is not LGBTQ friendly. Its teachings is one man and one woman. I am happily married to my husband, but I am also the pride coordinator for my students at school.

May they believe what they want, but claiming that they are trying to improve the area and bring together community is far from the truth. So their child care center and recreation areas will be open to same-sex couples? I am sure that no same-sex couples would even dare to attend that church or its facilities. North Albany has come a long way to become LGBTQ friendly. This church does not promote any of it. Hypocrites, if you ask me.

Our area is a haven; wildlife, peace and tranquility, a paradise. Please don't take our haven away from our area

Sincerely,  
Katja Horan  
541-990-5944

## BOZIGAR Shannon

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**From:** . MOM . <sgwhitacre@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 21, 2026 6:45 AM  
**To:** Benton Public Comment  
**Subject:** NO NO NO North Albany Church on Powers

You don't often get email from sgwhitacre@hotmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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NO NO NO North Albany Church on Powers

I strongly disagree with the proposed location for this church in North Albany.

Reasonings: - Location is outside the urban boundary limit.

- Location is in middle of housing on large private property lots; min of two acres.
- Neighboring homes should not have to sacrifice their property to enlarge current road which has no sidewalk, no bike lane, roads are already a hazard for foot traffic.
- Roads will not be able to sustain additional traffic or overflow parking if necessary.
- The light pollution and additional traffic would be a nuisance to neighborhood.
- North Albany is swampy, wet land !!!
- I believe this location would require septic tank installation in a wetland.
- Too much traffic & bottle neck issues already at intersections.
- Roads already an issue with housing developments.
- Already unreasonable growth for residential housing in North Albany.
- North Albany is not able to sustain this pushed growth.

Horrible location for Proposed Church Project!

Response to following information in facebook post: There is a proposal to turn this property at 4500 Powers into a MEGA-CHURCH! · Comprised of 3 buildings (Church-Gym-Storage) totaling 75,771 square feet · Parking for 736 vehicles meaning concrete or blacktop on 5 ACRES · Widening the entire width of Powers and potentially needing to buy some of the neighboring properties. 1) if you would like this to remain-- You can email to the County Planning Commission at [publiccomment@bentoncountyor.gov](mailto:publiccomment@bentoncountyor.gov) (please include your address) the proposal is Proposed Action: LU-25-067: CUP – Church and Proposed Action: LU-25-066: CUP – parking variance. 2) Link to public hearing notes (when available) here -- note-the meeting was held 3-17-26 <https://cd.bentoncountyor.gov/planning-commission/> 3) We only have 6 days remaining to submit feedback!

Thank you,  
Susan Whitacre  
541-917-8896  
Residence on Gibson Hill Rd

## BOZIGAR Shannon

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**From:** Betty Larson <bettina\_larson@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 20, 2026 7:16 PM  
**To:** Benton Public Comment  
**Subject:** Proposed Action: LU-25-067: CUP – Church and Proposed Action: LU-25-066: CUP – parking variance.

You don't often get email from bettina\_larson@comcast.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

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March 20, 2026

Attention Benton County Planning Commission

RE: Conditional Use Permit LU-25-66 and 67  
Development of 47 acres on Powers Ave NW for a Church Complex

Dear Planning Commission

My name is Betty Larson. I live at 3895 NW Terra Lynda Dr. I also own a half-acre of vacant property that runs along Powers Ave. I am writing to express my opposition to the change in zoning and the building of a large church on the property on Powers Ave. I attended the entire planning meeting on 3/17/26 via zoom and heard testimony on both sides of the project.

I echo many of the concerns that have been voiced by the residents of this area.

**1) Traffic concerns.** This road is very narrow and already a bit risky to walk/bike on due to no shoulder. It is used by many people walking, with strollers and dogs (including me). It is a frequently used running path. I have concerns about increasing the traffic due to the size of the church complex, and fear injury or death with a narrow road and fast-moving vehicles. As a property owner along Powers, I am concerned about having to give up property to widen the road. As a tax payer, I am concerned about having to pay for the widening and upkeep of the road due to increased use. The road is also becoming broken down in areas and the increase of traffic will only worsen this problem. I also have safety concerns with the narrow roads that feed Powers, such as Oak Grove and Scenic.

**2) Water concerns.** The area in consideration has a significant stream running through it and is quite wet. In Feb 2020, 8 acres of 2nd growth, 80 year old trees were logged on the property adjacent to mine on Powers, directly across the road from the Power's property. (Incidentally, this was never replanted per requirement). After that time, the neighborhood noticed a sharp increase in water issues in the area. Wet yards, drainage needing to be put in to deal with the excess water, more water heading downhill. In heavy rain, the drainage ditches along Power's are often overflowing, especially at the base of Terra Lynda Dr. I am concerned with a similar issue when this land is hardscaped with asphalt and large structures. The water must go somewhere. How will this impact downstream environments?

**3) Wild life.** We are in a significant wildlife corridor with many species using the area.

**4) Noise and light pollution.** This area is a bowl-shaped valley, where noise is carried easily. Many of us do not have air conditioning in our homes, and have windows open all summer. Voices, cars, dogs, roosters can be heard for quite a distance through the area. The parking lot lights will directly affect those in view of the property.

**5) Congestion.** While I appreciate the church's mission to "serve the community", I am concerned that this property will become a hardship to our local community due to congestion. It is hard to imagine 500 people coming into this small area on a weekly basis.

**6) Size.** The size of this complex at over 75,000 feet is overwhelming for this small area.

I have been a part of this church congregation in the past. I appreciate the fine leadership of the church and their mission to serve the community and have a place to worship. However, seeing the size of the facility planned, I do not feel this remote, rural piece of property is a good fit for the community and creates more hardship than service.

Thank you for hearing my concerns and the concerns of other residents in the area. I ask you to please **reject** the Conditional Use Permit LU-25-66 and 67.

Sincerely,

Betty Larson  
3895 NW Terra Lynda Dr.

## BOZIGAR Shannon

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**From:** Dani McCafferty <joedani@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 20, 2026 9:44 AM  
**To:** Benton Public Comment  
**Subject:** Proposed Action: LU-25-067: CUP – Church and Proposed Action: LU-25-066: CUP – parking variance.

You don't often get email from joedani@comcast.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

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I am writing in regard to the proposed building of Northside Christian Church at Powers Road.

Parking for 736 vehicles on 5 acres of blacktop? That's extraordinary. How can that not change the character of the area? I can't find the actual number of parking spaces at the Albany Costco, but in general, the average Costco has 700-800 spaces. That level of traffic traveling back and forth through Oak Grove or Scenic Drive to reach Powers on Sundays, would be a great disruption to the approximately 12,000 people who call this area home.

While the owner has requested a variance for 269 spaces, their plan is to add a second build three times that size. The additional parking spaces will have to added. The commission must look forward to that day and the disruption described above comes to fruition.

There would have to be substantial work on the roads immediately surrounding this development. Thus further changing the terrain and complexion of the area. Who's going to pay for it?

Kids ride bikes on weekends and school breaks and people walk their dogs on weekends as well on those two lane roads. Are there plans for bike lanes? Or do they just not use those roads once the only reason for the disruption, is built? It's not like a housing development, which increases traffic, but not at this level.

On the face of it, such an outsized facility does not belong in the hinterlands of North Albany.

Thank you for your attention.  
Danielle McCafferty  
3290 NW Kingston Way  
Albany, OR 97321  
541-926-7818

I do not give my permission for the use of my personal information, address and phone number, for use in any public publication of my comments.

## BOZIGAR Shannon

---

**From:** WRIGHT James  
**Sent:** Friday, March 20, 2026 1:21 PM  
**To:** Chelsey Vatcoskay; Benton Public Comment  
**Subject:** RE: Public feedback Lu-25-067, Lu-25-066

Greetings,  
Thank you for your comments, I have included them into the record.

Best regards,



### James R. Wright

Associate Planner  
Phone: 541-766-6819  
Email:  
[James.Wright@bentoncountyor.gov](mailto:James.Wright@bentoncountyor.gov)  
Address: 4500 SW Research Way, Corvallis  
OR 97333  
  
[www.co.benton.or.us](http://www.co.benton.or.us)

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**From:** Chelsey Vatcoskay <[chelseysunshine@yahoo.com](mailto:chelseysunshine@yahoo.com)>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 20, 2026 10:44 AM  
**To:** Benton Public Comment <[PublicComment@bentoncountyor.gov](mailto:PublicComment@bentoncountyor.gov)>; WRIGHT James <[james.wright@bentoncountyor.gov](mailto:james.wright@bentoncountyor.gov)>  
**Subject:** Public feedback Lu-25-067, Lu-25-066

You don't often get email from [chelseysunshine@yahoo.com](mailto:chelseysunshine@yahoo.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

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Planning Commission - Community Development

Re: LU-25-067 & LU-25-066

I am in very strong opposition of the proposed church campus on Powers Ave.

I live in the surrounding neighborhood but utilize Powers Ave for walking. If you aren't familiar with our area, none of the streets in this rural neighborhood are planned for heavy usage (it's deemed "rural" for a reason). My house sits on a small road that is not paved or county maintained, directly off of Oak Grove Drive. I try not to walk along Oak Grove as much as possible because it is very unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists. Cars travel at very high speeds, there is no shoulder on either side and there are steep drop offs.

Instead, we walk to the Dumbeck/Terrace neighborhood directly behind our home and walk along Powers (which is essentially a 1 lane road). These small roads are primarily used only by the neighborhood residents (as it is not a main thoroughfare, unlike Oak Grove and Scenic). All the residents are aware of the road situation and specifically moved to this neighborhood for the country feel. They always slow down, move over, wave, and make sure that walkers and cyclists are safe on Powers. If the church campus is approved, it will COMPLETELY change the neighborhood. Traffic WILL dramatically increase. And not just on Sunday. Child care, bible study, gym usage, amphitheater, pickleball and all the other activities they want to "benefit" the community will double the daily traffic on Powers (by their own calculations). It will definitely ruin the country, rural feel. It will certainly have environmental impacts, even if deemed small by the studies that were paid for. Water will certainly run from the property (& large septic leach fields) to the property's creek into the neighboring lake. Time will tell how large the actual environmental impacts will be. It will run off wildlife (including mice, which will definitely decide to move into people's homes). The church will make it more unsafe for the residents - from increased traffic, an almost guarantee of more accidents on the corner of Scenic/Powers and the icy roads of Scenic each winter, and more strangers in the neighborhood.

I feel badly for the immediate neighbors that this will directly affect (who I applaud for speaking up at the county meeting on 3/17). Lights will be on constantly, construction noise, noise from the hundreds of people visiting the campus and amplified in their amphitheater, acres of concrete, and a monstrosity of a structure (bigger than any of our North Albany schools) in the middle of country houses and acreage. Wildlife and the quiet nature feel will be replaced with people, noise and lights. I'm guessing the majority of the actual direct neighbors of this property would rather have 9 houses built on the property than this proposed mega-church campus. (Did the church even bother to ask the neighbors?) And to top it off - homeowners will be asked to give up some of their land for a major road improvement that would only be needed because of this church. If neighbors do not give up the land that they legally own, how does that work? Will the church still be built, but make the neighborhood even more unsafe and unenjoyable for residents? Mature trees, landscaping, farm stands, mailboxes and a little library will all need to be removed if the road is expanded for the huge increase in traffic.

If the parking variance is approved, cars will have no choice but to park along the road - like they do at Oak Grove Elementary. Easter, Christmas and trunk-or-treat bring in hundreds of extra people all at the same time. We know - we see it year after year. But the difference is its current location can handle the overflow because the school and roadway were designed for that. Their plans to expand their congregation guarantees even more cars. The proposed relocation site does not work, and cannot work without the help of the Powers residents (many of whom have stated they absolutely will not give up their land). The large acreage property right next to Oak Grove Elementary is currently for sale if they are set on being in this immediate area. The old Tom's Garden Center is also another feasible option in North Albany.

The church says their goal is to serve the community - but building at this particular location destroys our rural neighborhood community. This campus needs to be built in a more suitable area with better transportation options other than just getting there by a car. There is a reason why the company doing the comparables had to expand their search all the way down to Eugene to find a similar situation. There is nothing like this in Albany or Corvallis. Building a massive church campus in a RR2 rural farm neighborhood is a terrible idea. Please listen to the residents of this neighborhood and deny the request.

Chelsey Vatoskay

5085 NW Oak Hills Drive  
13 year resident - Household of 11 (who all oppose)

## BOZIGAR Shannon

---

**From:** Kiersten Glaeser <kglaeser63@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 20, 2026 12:18 PM  
**To:** Benton Public Comment  
**Subject:** Fwd: Church proposal on powers

[You don't often get email from kglaeser63@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

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>  
> Hello! My family and now I have been residents of north Albany since 1978... too much has changed out here over the the years and mostly not for the good. This proposal of a mega church on powers and science is another example of horrible ideas and planning! How on earth do you think this would be a good idea?! We are 100% against this proposal! There are plenty of empty buildings this mega church could buy to rent.. how about the empty busking for lease at the bottom of the hill that used to be a plant nursery for starters?  
> I urge a NO vote on this proposal!  
> Kiersten Glaeser  
> 1910 NW meadow wood Dr  
> North Albany  
> Sent from my iPhone

## BOZIGAR Shannon

---

**From:** L Goeltz <lgoeltz@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 20, 2026 10:32 AM  
**To:** Benton Public Comment  
**Subject:** Power Street Church Application

You don't often get email from lgoeltz@aol.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Friends,

I recently heard about the request to build a large church on property located in a residential area of North Albany. Although I do not live in this particular part of North Albany, I have driven through it many times. I would suggest that each of you come to this area and drive down Power Street (a narrow street through a residential area) to see for your self how the church traffic would impact this area. Given that this is an existing residential area that would be dramatically impacted by this church, I think that the idea is totally unacceptable. I hope that you will decline to approve this request.

Larry Goeltz  
2649 Westminster Way  
Albany

## BOZIGAR Shannon

---

**From:** Tamara Young <tamarayoungco@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 19, 2026 2:59 PM  
**To:** Benton Public Comment  
**Cc:** Nathan  
**Subject:** Here you go, clean and ready to paste: Subject: LU-25-067 and LU-25-066 Public Comment

You don't often get email from tamarayoungco@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To the Benton County Planning Commission,

My name is Tamara Young, and I am a property owner at 5020 Springhill Dr NW, Albany, OR 97321, as well as a small business owner in Portland.

My husband and I chose to invest in this area specifically because of its rural, agricultural character. We intentionally moved here for that open, protected landscape and slower pace. It is a major part of why we chose this community.

I am writing to formally oppose Proposed Action LU-25-067 (Conditional Use Permit – Church) and LU-25-066 (Parking Variance) for the development at 4500 Powers.

This proposal does not align with the intent of rural zoning. A development of this scale, over 75,000 square feet with parking for 736 vehicles and significant roadway expansion, introduces urban-level intensity into an area that has been intentionally preserved as agricultural and low-impact.

As business owners and property owners, we understand and respect that there are limitations on what can be done with agricultural land. We have had to follow those rules ourselves. Allowing an exception of this magnitude undermines those standards and sets a concerning precedent for future development.

I am very upset that this type of project is even being considered in an area that has been protected. It feels inconsistent with the expectations set for property owners who have chosen to live and invest here based on those protections.

Beyond land use compatibility, I am concerned about increased traffic, safety risks, environmental impact, and the permanent change to the character of this area.

I will be attending the hearing and strongly urge the Commission to deny both applications.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Tamara Young

5020 Springhill Dr NW

Albany, OR 97321—

**Tamara Young**

## BOZIGAR Shannon

---

**From:** Micheal Key <micheal.key54@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 19, 2026 9:10 AM  
**To:** Benton Public Comment  
**Subject:** Proposed church on powers

You don't often get email from micheal.key54@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello. I will keep this short and sweet. I live near the proposed church on powders and own a home near and am a be ton county tax payer. I love the idea. It is a great opportunity for the area for many reasons i should not even have to go into. Yes i am A Christ follower as i see what churches do for communities. They are already in the area and need a sufficient place to be at. Again, short and sweet. No i do not attend that church but I may in the future as it would be closer than one we visit now. Great opportunity

## BOZIGAR Shannon

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**From:** Audrey DEKAM <audie777@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 19, 2026 9:07 AM  
**To:** Benton Public Comment  
**Subject:** N. Albany resident input re: church proposal for 4500 NW Powers Rd

You don't often get email from audie777@comcast.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

This email is to express concern for the proposed church in rural-residential North Albany. The size and scale of this proposed building is enormous and out of context with an RR-2 area of Benton County. The amount of traffic that would be created by it would add to already congested areas of North Albany, which the last time I checked, is still very much in need of a new traffic study. Children, cyclist, pedestrians would be placed at greater risk. Wildlife would also be impacted.

Why a building of this volume is being considered for a semi-natural area, as opposed to many other infill opportunities, defies logic. It goes against what Benton County had held as valuable, which is to protect people and natural spaces.

Thank you,

Audrey M. DeKam  
2530 NW Ashley Drive  
Albany, OR 97321

## BOZIGAR Shannon

---

**From:** Pat Kelley <kelleyfamily137@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 18, 2026 4:33 PM  
**To:** Benton Public Comment  
**Subject:** Church on Powers Rd Albany

You don't often get email from kelleyfamily137@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Sirs:

I was interested to hear about the meeting last night on the above subject.

It was mentioned that the widening of Powers Road would be very costly.

I have driven Powers Road and Scenic Drive many times, sometimes twice a week. In addition to my concerns about the width of Powers and the inadequate embankments, Scenic Drive which feeds off of North Albany roads is in itself a problem as is Oak Grove Drive which connects to Powers on the west side. Both roads would allow access to the proposed church.

Both Scenic Drive and Oak Grove Drive are narrower, sometimes hilly country roads with the embankments and ditches are ever present. I myself do not like to drive Oak Grove Dr. With increased traffic that the church would bring on Sunday and other days of the week depending on their ministries, the need for replacing or upgrades these roads would take a chunk out of the county road budget.

The proposed church on Powers Road is a poor idea and likely bring increased road costs to the county.

Sincerely,

Patricia Kelley, home owner

## BOZIGAR Shannon

---

**From:** Jennifer Cox <brncfnjen@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 17, 2026 8:25 PM  
**To:** Benton Public Comment  
**Subject:** Church on powers road

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**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

As a long time North Albany resident I oppose this change in land use. We already have enough congestion in this area and do not need that additional traffic.

Please stop destroying what was once a wonderful place to live.

## BOZIGAR Shannon

---

**From:** Charlotte Campbell <charclick1@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2026 8:38 PM  
**To:** Benton Public Comment  
**Subject:** conditional use permit for N. Albany church

You don't often get email from charclick1@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Benton County Planning Commissioners:

I am strongly against the development of 9.43 acres at 4500 Powers Rd in North Albany for three good reasons:

1. It's outside the Urban Growth Boundary and there is space inside the UBG where the church could be built where there is existing infrastructure. The Urban Growth Boundaries exist for a reason and they are important to limit sprawl.
2. This large facility would definitely forever change the character of this area. It would benefit a relatively small number of people of a particular ideology at the expense of thousands who call this area home. I ride my bike, and often walked my children on Powers when they were little. It would be impossible to do this with the cars coming and going from a 269 space parking lot. I currently don't ride my bike on Oak Grove Rd on Sunday because members of this church park in the bike lane, as they hold their services at Oak Grove School. I'm not sure how it's legal to hold church services at a public school, but they do.
3. Most important of all, nature is my church. I believe Christians are supposed to protect the environment, not destroy it. In the early 90's this field bloomed solid blue with Camas in the spring. It's been a hay field for decades but those bulbs are most likely still there. The acreage should be restored to the wet meadow it was when the Kalapuya lived here, not paved over.

Thank you for considering this letter,  
Charlotte Campbell  
3425 NW Pineview Pl  
Albany, OR

## **BOZIGAR Shannon**

---

**From:** Beth Kemp <bkemp22@msn.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2026 3:42 PM  
**To:** Benton Public Comment  
**Subject:** Proposed Church Building on Powers Rd North Albany

[You don't often get email from bkemp22@msn.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Build it and they will come. "They" being developers who will soon be clamoring for UGB and zoning changes. Why would you change the zoning for one mega church to build in a rural area? Churches pay no taxes so who will pay for all the improvements needed to build this church? The taxpayers of course. Much of N Albany is on private septic tanks. How will that be handled for a huge church? What demands will this rezoning for 1 church place on the infrastructure? I am deeply opposed to this proposed church building in such a rural area.

Beth Kemp  
2955 NW Hillcrest St  
Albany, OR 97321

## BOZIGAR Shannon

---

**From:** THOMAS CAPEL <reefman64@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2026 12:57 PM  
**To:** Benton Public Comment  
**Subject:** 4500 Powers Road church

You don't often get email from reefman64@comcast.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Planning Commissioners:

In regards to the planned development at 4500 Powers Road, I would say that the definition of the word "Church" is at issue. The Benton County development code would allow a church in an RR 2 zone. But was a 54,709 square foot church with an 18,902 square foot gymnasium and a full time day care center with a massive parking lot what the writers of the Benton County Development code intended by the word "Church"?

I think not.

Add to this objection the additional traffic problems that will be created by the attendees to this church and you've got solid reasons for voting "NO!" on this development.

Thomas J. Capel  
NW Scenic Drive  
Albany, OR 97321

541-928-6640

## BOZIGAR Shannon

---

**From:** Lynda Capel <weaverwoman87@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2026 12:14 PM  
**To:** Benton Public Comment  
**Subject:** church

You don't often get email from weaverwoman87@comcast.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Benton County Commissioner Malone, Shepherd and Wyse,

Regarding consideration of allowing the proposed church complex to be built at 4500 Powers Rd.

I believe this church complex is out of character in this area and would seriously interfere with uses of adjacent property and the character and purpose of this rural residential area. The, now re-located, Palestine church was a good example of a community church suitable for this rural residential area. This huge complex is not.

With the increased warnings from regarding preparation incase of wild fire or earth quake there is no mention of evacuation routes. Evacuating from any where in N. Albany during any of these disasters is already a very sad joke.

With all the new home construction in N. Albany, and more to come, there seems to have been no thought of building new roads to facilitate the increased traffic we now have. Scenic Drive has become a death trap that functions as a high speed freeway.

The added traffic and congestion getting out of N Albany and over the Ellsworth bridge already makes it difficult to shop in downtown Albany. Sadly, It's often easier to just turn right and go to Corvallis.

Please think of these issues and imagine the future of this area when all the RR-2 lots are built to capacity and this church complex is built.

Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Lynda Capel  
5064 Scenic Dr. NW  
Albany, Oregon  
weaverwoman87@comcast.net

## BOZIGAR Shannon

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**From:** Pat Kelley <kelleyfamily137@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 15, 2026 7:08 PM  
**To:** Benton Public Comment  
**Subject:** Church on Powers Rd NW Albany

You don't often get email from kelleyfamily137@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Sirs: I live near Powers Rd and take that route from time to time. I am against the proposal of changing of the land parcel from RR-2. My reasons include:

-Numerous wildlife are in the area including bald eagles and deer. That area of north Albany is known for deer bounding across roads. It's dangerous!

-Powers Rd itself is a narrow country road without adequate embankments. On occasion I have slipped into the side gravel and had to correct my car. In addition the turn onto Powers coming from the northern direction is tricky in that you must almost come to a complete stop and then turn due to the ditch and embankment.

-Churches do not belong in this residential area. The people who reside in houses in the quiet area of Powers Rd are there because they value the rural feeling and peacefulness. More people, more traffic, more noise, more pavement and less wildlife are not what they desire in a rural property.

-There is no practical reason to change that parcel from RR-2. A group desiring that area to be a church is a want and not a need. I would have no objection for homes with 2 acres to be built there. That is practical because of the need for more housing.

Church properties are hard to find but please do not sacrifice our beautiful rural living in North Albany for a church and parking lot.

Sincerely,

Patricia Kelley, property owner in North Albany

## BOZIGAR Shannon

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**From:** Richard Vannice <rnvvannice@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 15, 2026 1:00 PM  
**To:** Benton Public Comment  
**Subject:** PUBLIC HEAROMG 16 March 2026 re 4500 Powers Rd.

[You don't often get email from rnvvannice@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

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We have lived in the 2100 block of Scenic Drive since 1963 and seen traffic go from, as I like to tell people, being able to sit in the front yard on a Sunday morning with a cup of coffee and watch "all the car" go by to what now amounts to many more.

Question - Has any traffic study been made on Scenic Drive, Oak Grove Road and Powers Rd.?? I have seen no traffic counters !!!!

Powers Rd is very narrow and cars traveling both directions have to slow considerably when meeting.

Pedestrians, and I have seen a number, have to get clear off the roadway into unsure footing to allow cars to pass. I cannot speak to Oak Grove Road because I seldom use it but it appears to me it is much the same.

Scenic Drive, for the most part, is wider and has bike lanes but the posted speed is 45 mph and that speed is not followed.

These roads/streets were not constructed to handle the traffic now using them and until that is done this request should not be allowed until the roadways have been improved and the speeds be lowered and that speed be enforced.

Thank you for your consideration.

Richard Vannice

## BOZIGAR Shannon

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**From:** Delfina Herrera Hoxie <dollphn@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 15, 2026 12:48 PM  
**To:** Benton Public Comment  
**Subject:** North Albany, Powers Street Proposal

You don't often get email from dollphn@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Please deny the request to build the Mega-church in North Albany. We have grown so much and need to catch up and breathe after the recent 20+ years of growth. The traffic is horrid in North Albany at all hours. What once was a small community of homes and open space is crowded and overwhelmed. We need more parks and open space for the survival of our children and our native animals. 15 years ago I could look across the street and see deer, geese, frogs running wild in the field. Now all I see are cheap homes and people who come and go without any sign of recognition to me, the town or land. I would love to have friends but that comes with time and familiarity not homes and churches that do not care for the land or neighbors. Open spaces bring us peace, not chaos. Please stop this atrocity of a church and save the people and the wildlife. Let us breath!

Thank you, Bob and Delfina Hoxie  
2734 NW Dover Avenue, Albany 97321

**From:** [Rachel Kleppe](#)  
**To:** [WRIGHT James](#)  
**Subject:** Case # LU-25-067  
**Date:** Saturday, March 21, 2026 7:13:50 PM

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You don't often get email from rachelkleppe21@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Mr. Wright,

I'm writing to you today in regards to the building project for Northside Church. My intent of this letter is to emphasize the importance and positive impact that my family believes Northside will bring to this community.

First of all, I would like to say that I can understand the concerns of the current residents in this rural community. I can understand feeling unsure of the potential changes this project (church) may bring. While understanding those concerns and 'unknowns', I would like to go over some of the ways that we as a church family can hopefully bring some reassurance to the community.

Our church is currently averaging around 380 people coming through the doors each Sunday, with a rough count of 140 cars parked during that time. It is my understanding that the first phase is designed to include 260+ parking spots. Comparing these numbers shows that there would be substantial parking arrangements for our Sunday services, as well any events held on church grounds. I understand that there may be concern from neighbors that the idea of overflow would be disruptive to their day-to-day lives, but we have full confidence that this would not be an issue seeing as we have designed these plans with that in mind. Our goal when designing this church was to keep the community itself in mind. One way that we have prioritized this is by building the church structure as far from the road as possible. The purpose of this design idea is in hopes that the building itself is as far out of sight as possible; for example it would be situated on a downhill slope, in hopes that this too would contribute to being seen less/not at all from the road. Again, I would like to emphasize that we only have plans for phase one, which will be a stretch for our church in and of itself.

The design and intent of this project is to be a blessing to the community, not a hindrance. Our prayer and design for this church would be that it can become a central hub for connection, resources and care. One of our top priorities is respecting the character and feel of the current community, which is why our leadership is so open and approachable to feedback. This church would not be exclusive to church members, but also a resource to anyone in need. Our hope and prayer is that by joining this neighborhood, we can bring a clean, safe, and connected feeling to all.

Sincerely,  
Rachel and Michael Kleppe

**From:** [APRIL LARSON](#)  
**To:** [WRIGHT James](#)  
**Subject:** case #LU-25-067  
**Date:** Friday, March 20, 2026 7:35:38 PM

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You don't often get email from [larsnapril@comcast.net](mailto:larsnapril@comcast.net). [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I am writing in support of the Northside Church building in North Albany. My husband and I, along with our adult children attend this church. My husband and I live in NE Corvallis and our daughter just recently moved into her first home, a new townhouse on Laura Vista, in North Albany.

The people at Northside desire a building, in the area that we want to serve in. The building would not be built just for us and Sunday morning. It would be another gym space available for basketball practice so families didn't have to drive across the river to another gym. It would be a daycare, so there would be another choice, close by, for families. We desire to serve the community.

Thank you for your consideration,  
April Larson

**From:** [John Buchanan](#)  
**To:** [WRIGHT James](#)  
**Subject:** Comments against LU-25-067 & LU -25-066  
**Date:** Saturday, March 21, 2026 4:47:17 PM

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You don't often get email from roadglide3532@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

My name is John Buchanan and I live at 3532 NW Scenic Dr, Albany, OR 97321. I have lived at this address for over forty three years now. I request that this email be included in the record for testimony against this proposal.

I attended the zoom meeting on this issue and it seemed that no one mentioned the impact on other roads in the area primarily Scenic and Oak Grove. To my understanding, no member of the Benton county commissioners live in this area and I would doubt that very many of you travel these roads very often, so I would encourage you to either as a group or one at a time. Take the trip out into this area. Following my directions and take a good look at the area and the impact this mega church will have on the local area. I recommend that you follow this route to get a true understanding of the damage to roads that is going to occur. Also to the safety problem, it's going to present the people living in the area.

Turn right off of Ryles lane onto Independence highway. Go 4.5 miles to Metge then turn left. Go 1.1 miles and turn left onto Oak Grove drive. Pay close attention to the drive up Oak Grove to Powers lane. Notice there is literally no side to the road, no place for people to walk or ride bicycles without being in the lane on travel and there's a lot of that kind of activities along this stretch of Oak Grove. Go 1.1 miles and turn right onto Powers Lane. Paying close attention as you travel Powers Lane to the number of places where the roadbed has already started giving way and there are bumps and low spots for the entire length of roadway with even more severe conditions as you approach Scenic Drive for a total of 0.7 miles. No matter which direction the construction equipment, heavy trucks, concrete trucks and dump trucks travel on Powers, the roadbed will not survive just the construction of any part of the proposed church.

\* My next point concerns the parking that is planned for a mega church.

With a gymnasium. It seems a little bit excessive until you consider peak usage times for the church. Days like easter, christmas and anytime, the church decides to do any kind of a large event at these times two hundred and sixty parking spaces will not be enough. The church claims that once the main building is built all activities well be moved to the church and away from the gym. So the additional parking in their opinion is unnecessary. Anyone who's ever been involved with a church knows that this is a false statement, church activities will expand into all available spaces. Activities will not be just limited to sundays like they indicated in the meeting. If you look at their web page on the activities that they presently do without having a permanent facility, you will find that they are way busier than they claimed in the meeting. I moved from town to this location over forty three years ago. My location in town was near a church that was barely 25% as large as the one being proposed. One of the reasons that I relocated was that there were daily activities for children, teens and church members throughout the weekdays.

Which made it very difficult with the constant noise. I made the move to this area to get away from having these kinds of facilities as my next door neighbors. Also during the meeting, the representatives of the church made it very clear that they did not feel that they should be

responsible for any improvements to the road systems to make it a safe environment for the residence of the area. Even though it is their impact and theirs alone that will cause the conflicts and the financial burdens of repairs.

\* If we look at the financial benefits to the county, once they've collected construction fees and any other permit fees. I think in the long run they will find loss of property values in the area, which I feel could be any home within a mile of the church's location, to far exceed money from the church.

I do hope that the county commissioners will pay close attention to the feelings of their constituents that live in the area that is being affected by this proposal. I encourage all of you to vote against this and any other development that will change the face of this area so badly.

Respectfully John Buchanan

P.S. please vote against

Darla Luther

2555 NW Squire Pl.

Albany, OR 97321

March 21, 2026

Benton County Community Development Department

360 SW Avery Ave.

Corvallis, OR 97333

Re: Support for LU-25-067 - Proposed Northside Church on Powers Rd. NW, North Albany

Attn: James Wright

Dear Mr. Wright,

I am writing in strong support of the proposed Northside Church development under Case No. LU-25-067 on Powers Rd. NW in North Albany. I have lived in North Albany since 2016, and during that time I have witnessed substantial population growth in both Albany and Benton County. Albany has added several thousand new residents since 2016, and Benton County has grown by an estimated 7,000-10,000 people over the same period. This steady increase in households and families has created a clear need for additional community resources.

My family has attended Northside Church for approximately two years, and I know many people in North Albany who also attend and rely on this church. We would all welcome having a beautiful, permanent church integrated into this close-knit community. Having Northside Church nearby would help make the community even more connected, strengthening relationships and providing a foundation for a healthy and supportive population. One consideration is that a church in this particular location would change the "feel" of the community as it is today. However, many of us believe that this change would be a positive one - adding a

Darla Luther

2555 NW Squire Pl.

Albany, OR 97321

March 21, 2026

stable, welcoming, and service-oriented presence that aligns with the values of North Albany.

In addition to supporting the project itself, I respectfully request that the County carefully consider whether it is appropriate to require Northside Church to pay for the widening of Powers Rd. NW. After reviewing the applicable transportation standards, proportionality requirements, and the County's own Transportation System Plan (TSP), it appears that imposing this cost on the church is neither reasonable nor supported by the governing framework.

#### 1. The Church's Traffic Impact Does Not Create a Need for Road Widening

Church traffic occurs primarily on weekends and evenings, well outside the weekday peak-hour periods that determine roadway capacity needs. Because Northside Church does not meaningfully contribute to congestion during the times that drive infrastructure planning, it cannot be said to "cause" or "necessitate" a road-widening project. Under Oregon's proportionality doctrine - including the Dolan standard - a development may only be required to fund improvements that are roughly proportional to the actual impacts it generates.

#### 2. The Benton County TSP Does Not Identify Powers Rd. NW as a Widening Corridor

The 2019 Benton County Transportation System Plan identifies where deficiencies exist and where future widening is planned. Powers Rd. NW is not listed as a corridor requiring widening to meet adopted performance standards. A development cannot be used as the funding mechanism for a public improvement unrelated to its impact.

Darla Luther

2555 NW Squire Pl.

Albany, OR 97321

March 21, 2026

### 3. Requiring the Church to Widen the Road Would Function as an Unlawful Exaction

Conditioning approval on a road-widening project that corrects a pre-existing condition, benefits the general public, or serves future unrelated growth is not permissible under Oregon law. The County may require proportionate mitigation, but it may not shift the cost of a public capital improvement onto a single private applicant - especially a nonprofit religious institution - when the improvement is not directly caused by the project.

### 4. Northside Church Provides Significant Community Benefit Without Burdening Public Services

This project will offer community gathering space, youth and family programs, volunteer and charitable services, and support networks for vulnerable residents. These benefits come at no cost to the County. Imposing an outsized infrastructure requirement risks preventing a community asset from being built at all.

### Conclusion

For these reasons, I respectfully request that Benton County approve LU-25-067 and carefully consider removing the disproportionate and unsupported requirement for Northside Church to widen Powers Rd. NW. The project is a valuable addition to North Albany, and the road-widening condition is neither necessary nor legally justified.

Thank you for your consideration and for your commitment to fair, reasonable, and proportional land-use decisions.

Sincerely,

Darla Luther

2555 NW Squire Pl.

Albany, OR 97321

March 21, 2026

Darla Luther

Elena Gorman  
3402 NW Knollwood Drive  
Albany, OR 97321

March 23, 2026

Re: Proposal to Build a Church Campus at 4500 NW Powers Road, Albany OR [LU-25-066/067]

Dear Members of the Planning Commission,

I wish to go beyond the obvious and woefully inadequate conditions currently in place for construction of an excessively large complex in the proposed field. I'm flabbergasted that erection of such a vast structure is even a remote consideration at this location. The fact that extensive reconstruction and remediation would be necessary to support such a structure, which will disrupt the existing ecosystem and neighboring homes, should make the argument against its construction moot. It was the topic of enriching the local community with a large church complex I would like to address as I do think the desire to serve community is a worthy and important concept.

Community currently exists in this space. This is our home. Not a place we merely visit for a few hours a week. We live, work, raise families, till our gardens, walk our dogs on the quiet roads and walk down those roads to buy eggs from our neighbor's farm stand. We sit on our porches to drink coffee or eat breakfast in the pristine quiet of the morning and read on our patios in the serene afternoons. Many of us have done this for their whole lives, some of us for the past few years when we joined this community for this quiet, rural peace.

We respect the other important members of our community; the many deer meandering in the field, the eagles and hawks flying overhead searching for field mice, the garter snakes in the grass near the creek and the cottontails leaving their burrows to sneak into our strawberry patches. They are also beloved members of this community.

I request that you to come to this area and observe and absorb the serenity of this space. If possible, come at night. Stop, turn off your headlights and leave your car for a moment on our quiet road. If it's clear, look up and gaze at the impossible number of stars above you, undimmed by light pollution. Listen the chorus of the thousands of frogs in the field and the owls hooting in the old trees on the knoll and along the road, unbothered by excess noise and artificial light. These quiet, unadulterated spaces are becoming rare in our sprawling cities. This is a glorious community!

In respect to our community, please decline the conditional use permit.

Thank you,

Dr. Elena Gorman

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**Josanna Biddle-Croco, Matthew Croco, Jamie Harper, Andrew Biddle**

4853 NW Dumbleck Ave  
Albany, OR 97321  
(541) 231-6454

23rd March 2026

**Benton County Planning Commission**

[publiccomment@bentoncountyor.gov](mailto:publiccomment@bentoncountyor.gov)

Proposed Actions:

LU-25-067 CUP - Northside Christian Church

LU-25-066 CUP - Variance Parking Standard

Dear Planning Commissioners,

I think all the testimony has been given to explain how unreasonable it is to claim that a "campus" with buildings 2.5x the square footage of the average Bi-mart, acres of parking lot, and an amphitheater with speakers blasting into the neighborhood is not going to impact the character of the neighborhood.

As an aside, no one was made more friendly by the rebuttal from the applicant that Benton County doesn't have a rural noise ordinance. That statement from the applicant came across as very disrespectful to those of us asking for peace, and an indicator that they don't intend to be polite neighbors.

I would like to address the case where the county decides to proceed anyway. The request for parking variance LU-25-067 is not in alignment with the actual usage the church requires. The ordinance requires parking for "peak usage" not for best case scenario parking. Unofficial counts of the parking used at their current location are more than their projected need (98 stalls in phase 1). Additionally, as we heard on March 17th, 2026, currently a portion of their attendees walk or ride their bikes to Oak Grove Elementary School. Parking needs will increase with the less convenient, more rural location. Currently, as shown in photographs in other people's submitted letters, the attendees park in the bike lane of Oak Grove behind the bollards specifically put in place to keep cars out of the bike lane.

It is unsafe for the church attendees to park on NW Powers Ave. The convenient side streets are not maintained by the county. These are maintained by neighborhood collections and weekend community gravel spreading or ditch digging projects. It is expensive and time consuming for the residents to maintain their roads for local use. If the church is put in place it will negatively impact these roads and all of their residents. Terra Lynda Dr is

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the closest place for overflow parking to spread and has a convenient turn around with the double exit around the flag pole. It seems inevitable that church parking will flow into this neighborhood. The parking variance should not be granted, it does not plan for the future or even for current peak use.

It is reasonable to ask the applicant to finance the upgrade to the full length of NW Powers Ave. That upgrade should include bike lanes on both sides of the road. NW Powers Ave is only 0.7 miles (3,700 ft) long. As the applicants have repeatedly expressed their traffic will be in limited windows (a.k.a. surges). If we lined up all the cars leaving the church they would exceed the length of that road, even if we stick to the requested 269 instead of the code required 736 parking spaces.

Average 15 ft/vehicle + 5 ft spacing = 20 ft each, for 269 vehicles

$20 \times 269 = 5380 \text{ ft}$

This, greater than a mile long, line of traffic will be piling up at stop signs trying to enter cross-traffic going 45 mph (on Scenic and Oak Grove). This scenario will be happening at the peak times for the local neighborhood to be walking and biking. Asking all the bikes, strollers, people, and dogs to squeeze two way traffic into one bike lane is dangerous.

Additional financial commitment to upgrade and maintain the impacted ancillary roads should also be a condition of approval. For example, Terrace (privately maintained) and Dumbeck (privately maintained) can be used as a shortcut to avoid traffic on the west end of NW Powers Ave. It is naive to believe that church attendees will never make the choice to shortcut around traffic during post-service surges.

This is not an excessive burden of cost to the applicant but instead a reasonable ask for their choice to move outside of the urban growth boundary. They have the option to select a property that is already zoned and ready for their arrival.

For example, there is a 6.19 acre parcel for sale on Hickory St in North Albany, MLS#: 836318. It is zoned Residential Mixed, accessible by roads with bike lanes, close to public transit, and in a neighborhood of apartment complexes and an assisted living facility. The water infrastructure is likely a better fit than our community built water system, paid for with liens on local homes. This available property contains no wetlands and has storm drainage already in place (per the listing). Therefore they would not have to set aside land for the stream and seasonal marsh present at their NW Powers Ave location. It does not have a forested hill that needs to be maintained for water quality. It allows for taller construction which may allow them to reduce their ground footprint. This property is listed at \$2,250,000. The applicant could choose to move to

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a location such as this where there would be no burden of upgrading infrastructure.

It is their choice, not necessity that brings them to this particular parcel. The decision to move outside of city and urban growth boundaries comes with the financial burden to maintain your own services. Just like all the residents out here who have community water liens and pool funds for the maintenance of local access roads.

Sincerely,

**Josanna Biddle-Croco**  
**Matthew Croco**  
**Jamie Harper**  
**Andrew Biddle**

**From:** [Kamelah Kumpula](#)  
**To:** [WRIGHT James](#)  
**Subject:** Case # LU-25-067  
**Date:** Friday, March 20, 2026 7:13:15 PM

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You don't often get email from kamelahnoel@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good evening Mr. Wright,

I am emailing to give my full support for Northside to be able to build phase 1 of the church building. Northside is such an important part of our community that supports the lives of not only my family, but many of my friends and their family as well. Northside has an amazing ability to reach those in need and does all they can to support them. With that being said, Northside is growing and needs a place to call home and build a solid foundation for the future so they can continue to be such a vital part of the lives they touch.

Along with my support, I would like to add that I do not find it fair for Northside to be forced to pay for the road. This is something that would need to be done no matter what, and forcing a brand new church to front that cost would kill the entire community to fund. This is something that I see as on the city to fund and take care of if need be, not the church.

Thank you for your time,

Kamelah Kumpula

**From:** [KC Cornell](#)  
**To:** [WRIGHT James](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Conditional Use Permit for proposed church; LU-25-067  
**Date:** Sunday, March 22, 2026 12:49:19 PM

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You don't often get email from 2kccornell@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To Whom It May Concern,

We are writing to express our strong support for the Conditional Use Permit regarding Northside Church's proposed building at 4500 NW Powers Ave., Albany, OR. [LU-25-067]

As residents of North Albany since 1997, and of Benton and Linn counties since 1992, we believe this church would be a wonderful addition to our community. Our support is rooted in personal experience; when we moved to Colorado in 1989, a local rural church provided our family with invaluable support during a difficult transition. We believe Northside Church will offer similar benefits to the Albany community.

The project is thoughtfully designed to fit its rural setting. The first phase includes a ~9,000 sq. ft. building with ~260 parking spaces, positioned on lower ground to reduce visibility from the road. Furthermore, the facilities are intended for community use, providing a space for meetings, weddings, and indoor recreation.

Northside Church is a rapidly growing congregation that serves individuals and families across all age groups. The community's response to this church plant has been exceptional, and we believe its presence will foster a greater sense of connection and kindness in our area.

We urge you to approve the permit for this project.

Sincerely,

Keith and Christine Cornell

File Number (LU-25-067)

---

**Ken and Sandie Radford**

3536 NW Scenic Drive  
Albany, Or 97321  
(541)926-9792  
ssnds28@gmail.com

March 22, 2026

**James Wright**

Benton County Community Department  
4500 SW Research Way  
Corvallis, Or 97333

Dear Commissioners,

We are writing with regard to the proposed development by Northside Church to develop a campus for construction on the property at 4500 Powers Avenue in North Albany,

We live at 3536 NW Scenic Drive, 3 houses South of Powers Avenue. We purchased this 52 years ago because it was in the country. We love it here because it is quiet and peaceful.

Our daughter and family live to the West of the proposed Northside campus property. In the winter and spring their driveway floods due to the run off water that goes through the proposed site where they want to build. Last year the water went all the way up to their garage.

We drove by the property today and the water was running in the ditches through the property. We also noticed there is an active spring by the West end of the property. This will require a lot of fill to get the property ready to develop. The roads are narrow and Powers, Scenic and Oak Grove would need to be widened. This needs to be the responsibility of Northside Church.

Powers has a lot of pedestrian traffic, dog walkers, joggers, etc. and unsafe auto traffic.

The comment was made Tuesday evening that their meetings and activities would primarily be during low traffic periods. The posted schedule online doesn't support that assessment. A child daycare would cause a twice daily traffic spike 5 days a week.

We often see eagles, deer, squirrels, coyotes, raccoons, possums, and various birds including a covey of quail going through our yard to the property described. This is the country and not a place for a large church campus like Northside. It would be much better for them to purchase land in a more advantageous area where they can be seen and have their congregation grow,

The other concern we have is that we are not sure the size of the congregation can afford to make all the road improvements, construction of the large buildings, and do all the landscaping required, even if it is over 10 years. We have been involved in building a church from the ground up and it doesn't go as smoothly as you think. This is a large undertaking which will require a huge investment.

For the many reasons we have included in this letter, we are opposed to the constructing of the Northside Church campus at this location.

Respectfully.

Ken and Sandie Radford

Ken Radford

Sandie Radford

Joy Maynard

Patricia Maynard  
3548 NW Scenic Dr

Albany OR 97321

**From:** [Kyra Hanson](#)  
**To:** [WRIGHT James](#)  
**Subject:** Case# LU-25-067  
**Date:** Saturday, March 21, 2026 10:34:55 PM

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You don't often get email from kyrahanson@luxkh.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear James and Members of the Benton County Planning Commission,

As a resident of north Albany living near 4500 Powers Avenue, I truly care about preserving the qualities that make this area so special. It has open views, quiet mornings, and the presence of wildlife that many of us experience on our daily walks. At the same time, I believe strong, connected communities are built through thoughtful gathering spaces that support families. What stands out to me about this proposal is that it does not force a choice between those two values, it actually carefully works to protect both.

I am writing in support of the Conditional Use Permit for the Northside Church project (Case No. LU-25-067) and respectfully ask the Commission to approve the requested zoning accommodation.

From a land use perspective, this proposal demonstrates clear compatibility with the surrounding rural character. The decision to site the structure on the lowest portion of the property and as far back as possible meaningfully reduces visual impact, preserves sightlines, and minimizes disruption to wildlife. These are not minor considerations. They actually directly align with the intent of maintaining the rural feel that RR-2 zoning is meant to protect.

The project also provides tangible community benefits that are appropriately scaled. Planned features such as a daycare, soccer field, gym facilities, and walking path serve local families without introducing intensive commercial activity. Importantly, the daycare component improves transportation efficiency by reducing repeated trips into town, thereby lowering overall daily traffic volumes rather than increasing them. Much more efficient, for those who care.

Traffic concerns, while understandable, appear to be mitigated by current and planned capacity. Northside Church averages about 380 attendees, around 140 vehicles observed on a recent Sunday. Phase 1 includes over 260 parking spaces—nearly double current demand. This reflects proactive planning that accommodates growth while preventing spillover onto surrounding roads, which some in opposition were worried about (this would actually free up some of the parking congestion on Oak Grove.) Additionally, the primary peak usage is limited to specific times (such as Sunday mornings), rather than generating continuous daily traffic. Some people will get out of bed late in the morning on a lazy Sunday and not even know that any traffic happened!

Under existing RR-2 zoning, this 19-acre parcel could support nine or more residential dwellings by right, without discretionary review. That level of development would introduce multiple access points and consistent daily trip generation throughout the week. In contrast, the proposed use consolidates activity, limits peak impacts to predictable timeframes, and

provides shared community value.

On a personal level, Northside Church has already been a meaningful part of my family's life. It is where my sons have found connection, mentorship, and a sense of belonging. It's where my first born learned to sing, "Yes, Jesus Loves Me." Having a thoughtfully designed space both indoors and outdoors, within our own community allows families like mine to grow and stay rooted here.

I also want to point out that many of us who support this project value being good neighbors, even to those who disagree with the importance of church or even religion in general. We respect that not everyone shares the same perspective, and we are committed to building and maintaining trust within the North Albany community. This proposal reflects that intention through its careful design and community-oriented focus.

For these reasons land compatibility, measured traffic impact, efficient use, and clear community benefit, I respectfully urge the Commission to approve the Conditional Use Permit for the Northside Church project.

Thank you very much for your valuable time and thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,  
Kyra Hanson (Christian/Nurse/Mother)  
Near Powers Avenue  
North Albany Resident

I am a resident of North Albany and learned in today's newspaper (March 21, 2026) of the pending application by Northside Christian Church to convert 4500 Powers Avenue NW into a church and community center. Having lived around the corner of this property for the past 27 years, I can tell you that putting a church and community center in rural residential zoning will negatively change the character of the area. First, Powers Ave is barely wide enough to drive two cars. As I frequently bicycle along that road, I can tell you it will be a nightmare if there are hundreds of vehicles entering & exiting there not only every Sunday for services, but during the week as well with the planned community center. I've cycled past the Oak Grove elementary school where the church currently rents space on Sundays; the road is crowded with overflowing cars parked along the side of Oak Grove Drive. At least there is a decent bike trail along Oak Grove Drive for bikes and pedestrians by the school, which is not true further north on Oak Grove Drive or Powers Avenue. This application would also put a strain on the feeder streets (Scenic Drive and Oak Grove Drive) which are heavily used by pedestrians and cyclists. Lastly this application would greatly change the character of the rural residential area. We moved out here to escape the city and enjoy country life, with lots of wildlife and quiet. Putting a church and community center in this neighborhood will negatively impact both wildlife and solitude. Is it really permissible under Rural Residential to site such a large proposal? It would be much safer and appropriate in the more populated area of North Albany.

Laura Tully <[lori.a.tully@gmail.com](mailto:lori.a.tully@gmail.com)>

Nicholas Coreson  
3463 Knollwood Dr  
Albany, OR  
03-21-2026

Benton County Planning Commission

Subject: Opposition to Proposed Church Development on Powers Drive (North Albany)

Dear Commissioners,

My name is Nicholas Coreson, and I am a resident of North Albany. I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed church development on Powers Drive.

I previously spoke at the planning meeting and share many of the concerns already raised. However, I would like to highlight an additional issue that I believe warrants careful consideration: the financial viability of this project.

During the applicant's presentations, it was indicated multiple times that additional fundraising would be required to complete the project. There also appeared to be concern from the applicant regarding the potential cost of necessary road improvements. Taken together, this raises serious questions about whether sufficient funding has been secured to successfully complete the development.

I have worked in the construction industry for approximately 15 years and have seen firsthand the consequences of projects that run out of funding mid-construction. In more central or high-demand areas, partially completed developments may be acquired and finished by another party. However, given the scale of this proposal—approximately 75,000 square feet—and its location in North Albany, it is highly unlikely that a partially completed structure would attract a buyer.

My concern is that, if the project proceeds without fully secured financing, the community could be left with an unfinished structure that becomes a long-term hazard and blight. Such a site could also become encumbered by liens from contractors and vendors, further complicating any future resolution.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Commission to carefully evaluate whether the applicant has demonstrated adequate financial capacity to complete the project before granting approval.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Nicholas Coreson

Dear Benton County Planning Commission,

We, the undersigned, are writing to express our strong support for the Conditional Use Permit (Case No. LU-25-067) for the proposed church facility at 4500 NW Powers Avenue in North Albany.

We are grateful for the time, diligence, and care the Commission is giving to this process, and we hope this letter provides helpful clarity and perspective as you consider this request.

First, we want to affirm the thoughtful and measured approach being taken with this project. The initial phase under consideration is intentionally modest in scope—approximately 9,000 square feet with around 260 parking spaces—representing only a portion of the broader long-term vision. This phased approach reflects a desire to grow responsibly and in step with both community needs and county guidance.

Additionally, careful attention has been given to the placement and design of the building. The structure is positioned farther back on lower ground to reduce its visibility from the road, and planned landscaping is intended to preserve and complement the rural character of the surrounding area. These decisions demonstrate a genuine effort to respect the existing environment and the concerns of neighboring properties.

More importantly, this project has been shaped by a deep desire to serve the community well. Each element has been considered with the question: "How can this also benefit the people around us?" The vision includes not only a place of worship, but also potential shared spaces such as green areas, a walking path, recreational facilities like a gym, and possibly a daycare—resources that can be meaningful and accessible to the broader community.

Churches often serve as more than gathering places for weekly services. In many communities, they become spaces where relationships are formed, families are supported, and young people are mentored in safe and encouraging environments. They can provide stability, connection, and care—especially in rural areas where opportunities for community gathering may be more limited.

Many of us have personally experienced the positive impact a church community can have, not only in our own lives but in the neighborhoods around us. We believe this proposed facility has the potential to contribute in similar ways—strengthening relationships, supporting families, and fostering a greater sense of connection and well-being in North Albany. Change is hard, but we really do believe this community could use something like this.

We respectfully ask that you consider approving this Conditional Use Permit. We believe this project reflects both a sensitivity to its surroundings and a sincere commitment to being a positive and contributing presence in the community.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Albra

Hannah Jones

~~Michelle~~

Christa Jones

Julie Sabul

John Van

John

Cynthia Jones

M. Jones

Rich & Becky Smith

Chris

~~John~~

Shirley A. Line

June Taylor

Kimberly

Jonathan Webber

Mrs. P. Bushby

~~Michelle~~

Mr. Tom

Caroleanne

Nathaniel Kemmer

Kim Perkins

~~John~~

CSCA 1990

Rebecca Seebach

Christine Cornell

John

Michael E. McGregg

Keith A. Cornell Jr

Caroline

Frank

John

John

John

for all

Sinda Chutz

James

Sharon

John

Doug & Vicki Engel

Rob & Corvina BERG

Lisa

John

Karen

John

Robert

Summer

~~na~~

~~Wally~~

~~1055~~

~~Erin Hill~~

Susan Valer

Elaine Austin

Mark McLaughlin

~~Paul Hill~~

Bobby Perry

Barbi Hemmer

Darce Anderson

~~Karen~~

Karen Skye

~~Paul Cuprick~~

~~Deanne~~

~~DM~~

Jong

Brenda Mills

**From:** [Rob Verdeyen](#)  
**To:** [WRIGHT James](#)  
**Subject:** LU-25-067  
**Date:** Monday, March 23, 2026 8:09:34 PM

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3/23/26

To: Benton County Planning Commission

Subject: Case Number LU-25-067 – Conditional Use Permit Support for Northside Christian Church

Dear Commissioners,

My name is Rob Verdeyen, and I have had the privilege of serving as a pastor in Corvallis for 30 years. I am writing to express my support for the proposed church at 4500 NW Powers Ave and to share some thoughts on the positive impact a church can have in a rural community.

Over the years, I have witnessed firsthand how a local church can become a cornerstone for a neighborhood—not just spiritually, but socially and practically as well. In a rural area, a church often provides a central place for connection, support, and guidance. It becomes a hub where families gather, friendships form, and people of all ages find encouragement and purpose. Unlike in a more urban setting, rural churches often serve as an anchor for community identity, bringing together neighbors who might otherwise have fewer opportunities for meaningful interaction.

As a pastor, I have also seen the way a church can engage in the life of a community—through volunteering, mentorship programs, support for local schools, and initiatives that help neighbors in practical ways. A church in a rural setting has the unique opportunity to build deep, long-lasting relationships with the people around it. Its presence encourages stability, fosters care for one another, and strengthens the social fabric in ways that are hard to quantify but deeply felt.

I am grateful for your consideration of this Conditional Use Permit and for the thoughtfulness you give to decisions that impact the character and well-being of our communities. I wholeheartedly support the establishment of this church and the positive contribution it will bring.

Sincerely,  
Pastor Rob Verdeyen  
Calvary Corvallis

**From:** [Barbi Hemmer](#)  
**To:** [WRIGHT James](#)  
**Subject:** LU-25-067  
**Date:** Monday, March 23, 2026 7:27:56 AM

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**Dear Benton County Planning Commission,**

I am writing to you today not just as a resident of North Albany, but as a mom and a grandma who deeply cares about the future and well-being of our community. My heart is full of hope for what the proposed church facility at 4500 NW Powers Avenue could bring to our neighborhood.

I appreciate the careful thought to this project as a responsible way to grow with a genuine desire to be good neighbors and grow alongside the community, not overwhelm it.

I feel the design shows respect for the rural charm we want to preserve for our children and grandchildren.

Churches often become the heart of a community, serving the people who live here, giving a stronger sense of community where relationships are formed. In our rural area, where gathering spots can be limited, a place like this is a true blessing.

Change can be difficult, but my heart tells me this community could truly use something like this—a place of care and connection for young and old alike.

I respectfully ask that you consider approving this Conditional Use Permit. I believe this project reflects a sincere commitment to being a positive, contributing presence that will better our community for generations to come.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

*Barbi Hemmer*

**From:** [Jamey Mills](#)  
**To:** [WRIGHT James](#)  
**Subject:** LU-25-067  
**Date:** Monday, March 23, 2026 2:49:41 PM

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Not sure if I'm allowed to submit again after the first part of our hearing, but I felt like I should.  
Hopefully, there are more letters coming in.

### **To the Benton County Commissioners,**

My name is Jamey Mills, and I serve as the Lead Pastor of Northside Church in Albany. I am writing in support of the Conditional Use Permit for the proposed church facility at 4500 NW Powers Avenue in North Albany.

Prior to Northside, I served at Suburban Christian Church from 2001 to 2019. I understand that Suburban's building process has previously been referenced by the County as an example. Having walked through that experience, I deeply value what it looks like for a church to integrate thoughtfully and responsibly into its surrounding community.

From the beginning, our goal for the Powers property has been to preserve the rural character while creating a space that serves both our church and the broader community. We have intentionally pushed the building as far back on the property as possible and designed it to work with the natural slope. While Phase One is not split-level, Phase Two would use a split-level design to take advantage of the natural grade, placing a significant portion of the structure below sightline and minimizing visibility from the road. This is a deliberate choice, not wasted space.

Landscaping and limited hardscape have been designed to maintain the rural feel and soften the visual presence of the building.

Phase One has a footprint of approximately 9,000 square feet. The planned seating capacity of 500 is not reflective of weekly attendance, but allows for occasional high-attendance services like Easter and Christmas Eve. Our average Sunday attendance is 380, and we are **not the "megachurch"** some have portrayed. Phase Two is beyond the current reach of our congregation and represents what could be utilized in the future if growth allows.

I personally contacted both Calvary Chapel and Suburban Christian Church to verify building sizes. Calvary Chapel's total square footage is approximately 33,000, with additional buildings on site. Suburban's total square footage is approximately 40,000, consisting of three connected buildings. This puts Northside's proposed building in proper perspective (if not counting the basement that is there due to the slope of the land, of course, we'd hope to finish it out someday).

Concerns have been raised about the road being "heavily used" and dangerous for pedestrians. To assess this firsthand, I spent three consecutive hours one evening—starting at 5:30 p.m.—observing that portion of Powers Avenue along with four other church leaders. The temperature was 62 degrees, and we watched people walking directly on the roadway. **In those three hours, we saw only one group of five younger adults walking on the road, including the gentleman who testified that he moved there to be away from people.** This suggests the road may not be used as heavily as has been portrayed, and if it were truly as dangerous as described, it is unlikely anyone would be walking on it at all. This further supports the need for safe, designated walking paths within the proposed development.

Over the last two Sundays, we have counted every vehicle parked at Oak Grove Elementary, where we currently hold our church services. There were a total of 147 and 140 Vehicles present at the last two services (attendance average over those two weeks was 391).

Last summer, we made a deliberate effort to engage neighbors by hosting a barbecue, which was attended by approximately 35 people. While some concerns were expressed, the event also led to positive conversations about how this space could serve and benefit the community. One neighbor, Patrick, who has consistently opposed the project, purchased his property about three years ago. Before buying, he reached out to ask if we planned to build a church on the adjacent land. We shared that building a church was the intended plan. While he expressed concern about whether the existing trees would be preserved, which our plans honor.

We have also worked closely with County staff, incorporating their suggestions into our design. While each revision has cost implications, we have chosen to implement those changes as part of our commitment to thoughtful, responsible planning.

Regarding road widening, I respectfully disagree with testimony suggesting that

a church capable of building this facility could easily absorb that burden. For Northside, **requiring road widening would be an undue burden and could potentially prevent even Phase One from moving forward.** Finances are one of the major reasons this project is phased.

At its core, this project is about blessing the community. It includes green space, walking paths, potential childcare, and, in a future phase, a commercial kitchen to serve in times of need. It also creates space for weddings, memorials, and community gatherings—important moments in the life of a neighborhood.

We recognize that not everyone will immediately share this vision. However, we believe what is being proposed is thoughtful, responsible, and ultimately beneficial to North Albany. We also care deeply about our neighbors. We hear them and their concern. We know that change is hard, but we really do feel like this will be a community benefit.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and service.

Respectfully,  
Jamey Mills  
Lead Pastor, Northside Church  
Albany, Oregon

**From:** [Lora Dill](#)  
**To:** [WRIGHT James](#)  
**Subject:** LU-25-067:CUP- Church  
**Date:** Sunday, March 22, 2026 2:56:13 PM

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## Benton County Planning Commission

The proposed Church project at this location is wrong. The impact in this RURAL community will be overwhelming for all of whom live here and the surrounding communities. All of the weekly meetings, not limited to PickleBall, weddings, gymnasium rentals, community events, daycare, not discounting every Sunday and every religious recognized holiday will impact traffic congestion and noise. NW Powers avenue is already a commuter shortcut to and from Independence HWY and HWY 99 from Albany / Independence residential communities.

The area has previously been noted as a wetland, wildlife area. Bald Eagles, Bobcat, Raccoon, Skunk, Deer, and Waterfowl have been seen.

Where do these majestic animals move to or do they just disappear.....

We don't as many others have expressed want to live by a mammoth structure as proposed by this Church / Business. Our community invites the Planning Board to visit NW Powers Avenue, STOP, get out of your vehicle and experience what we all see and love about our neighborhood. We fear this will be lost with the approval of such a large and frequented facility.

Jesus didn't need 76 Thousand Square Feet to share the word of God.

Respectfully submitted,

Shand and Lora Dill  
3589 NW Terrace Dr.  
Albany, OR. 97321

**From:** [Mike King](#)  
**To:** [WRIGHT James](#)  
**Subject:** Case Number LU-25-067 – Conditional Use Permit Support for Northside Church at 4500 NW Powers Avenue  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 24, 2026 8:30:59 AM

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Dear Commissioners,

My name is Mike King, and I serve as Pastor at Suburban Church, the founding church of Northside Church. I am writing to express my support for the proposed church at 4500 NW Powers Avenue and to share some perspective on the unique benefits a rural church brings to its community.

Suburban Church has long been committed to serving in a rural setting, and over the years we have seen the deep and lasting impact a church can have when it is fully embedded in its neighborhood. Rural churches offer a place for families to gather, relationships to form, and communities to thrive. Beyond spiritual guidance, they provide practical support, mentorship opportunities, and programs that engage the community in meaningful ways.

As the founding church of Northside Church, Suburban has had the privilege of nurturing and supporting the growth of a church that now serves families across our area. Initiatives such as *Night to Shine*, local outreach programs, and community events have not only strengthened our members but also brought joy, care, and hope to neighbors who might otherwise feel isolated. The rural context allows these efforts to reach deeply into the community, building connections that endure across generations.

Supporting this new church will continue a legacy of investment in rural areas that we have seen bear fruit time and time again. Pastors, like myself, naturally advocate for similar opportunities in neighboring towns because we know the difference a church presence can make—not just spiritually, but socially and practically—for families and individuals. A new church in this setting can become a hub of care, stability, and encouragement, and can inspire similar initiatives throughout the county.

Thank you for your careful consideration of this Conditional Use Permit. I wholeheartedly support the establishment of this church and the positive impact it will bring to its rural community.

Sincerely,  
Mike King  
Pastor, Suburban Church  
Founding Church of Northside Church

**From:** [ken riutta](#)  
**To:** [WRIGHT James](#)  
**Subject:** Northside Church construction  
**Date:** Saturday, March 21, 2026 6:20:06 AM

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Dear Mr Wright,

I have been attending Northside Church for a few years since moving to the Albany community. Please consider the following regarding upcoming decisions about the project.

Northside Church should not be required to bear the financial burden of widening a county road before constructing a new building because such a requirement places a disproportionate strain on a modest, community-focused organization. Unlike commercial developers or large institutions, rural churches are typically funded by congregations through donations, volunteer labor, and limited fundraising. Imposing infrastructure costs—often designed for higher-traffic developments—can delay or completely prevent the construction of a place of worship that serves as a spiritual and social anchor for the surrounding area.

Additionally, county roads are public infrastructure maintained for the benefit of all residents, not just a single entity. Requiring Northside Church to fund road widening effectively shifts a public responsibility onto a private, nonprofit group. Improvements to roadways should be planned and funded at the county or state level, where broader transportation needs and budgets are evaluated fairly. If a road truly requires widening due to increased use, that need likely extends beyond the church alone and should be addressed as part of long-term public planning, rather than as a condition placed on a single project.

Finally, Northside Church could provide significant community benefits that extend beyond religious services, including food drives, shelter during emergencies, youth programs, and gathering spaces for local events. Burdening one organization with high development costs risks limiting these contributions or preventing them altogether. Supporting, rather than hindering, the growth of such institutions strengthens rural communities. Therefore, requiring Northside Church to pay for road widening is not only inequitable but also counterproductive to the broader public good.

Thanks very much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely, Kenneth Riutta

**From:** [Rhonda Hanssen](#)  
**To:** [WRIGHT James](#)  
**Subject:** Northside Church in Albany  
**Date:** Saturday, March 21, 2026 8:32:08 PM

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Dear Benton County Planning Commission

I am writing to express my support for establishing a church on the property located in Northwest Albany.

As our community continues to grow, so does the need for spaces that foster connection, support, and shared values. A church would not only serve as a place of worship, but also as a hub for community outreach, family support, youth programs, and volunteer efforts that benefit residents of all ages and backgrounds.

Churches often provide essential services such as food drives, counseling, mentorship programs, and community events that strengthen neighborhoods and bring people together. Having a church in this area would help meet the spiritual and social needs of many families who currently have limited access to such resources nearby.

Additionally, a well-planned church can positively contribute to the community by maintaining the property, managing traffic responsibly, and creating a welcoming environment that enhances the surrounding area.

I respectfully ask that you consider the value and impact a church would bring to Northwest Albany and support efforts to allow its development on this property.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and dedication to serving our community.

Sincerely,

Rhonda & Alan Hannsen 450 NW

Juniper Ln Albany Or 97321

alarhodrew@comcast.net

503-580-5630

Sent from my iPhone

Benton County Oregon  
Community Development Department  
4500 SW Research Way  
Corvallis, OR 97333

Re: LU-25-067: CUP – Church

The statements below are supplementing my testimony in opposition on March 17, 2026.

While an increase traffic is stated and was discussed in depth, little attention was given as to when and at what concentration it would occur in terms how one observes traffic. Notwithstanding the daily impact daycare and evening programs would create, my recent observations show the number of vehicles parked at the applicant's current Sunday service varies between 150 – 170. Assuming a small increase in the number of drivers in the future, 180 vehicles (which is 67% of the proposed 269 parking spaces) arriving for service over a 20-minute period works out to 1 vehicle every 6.7 seconds. Stretch that to 30 minutes, it's 1 vehicle every 10 seconds. When service is over, the same number of vehicles will be competing to leave while idling as they wait their turn to exit. This will be a substantial increase in noise and air pollution.

Besides traffic noise other sources must be considered as well such as industrial sized HVAC units, commercial kitchen fans and outdoor activities.

The proposed facility is at the bottom of a small valley with higher slopes to the north and south and lesser slopes to east and west. Any noise or sound from this location will be amplified primarily through a combination of physical reflection and atmospheric refraction, a phenomenon often described as the "amphitheater effect". As sound waves travel upward, the slopes act as reflectors, bouncing the sound back and forth across the valley, which prevents the acoustic energy from scattering into the open atmosphere. Furthermore, during stable atmospheric conditions—particularly at night—a temperature inversion often develops, where cold air settles in the valley bottom and warmer air sits above it. This inversion causes the sound waves to bend or refract downward back towards the ground rather than escaping upward, essentially creating a natural waveguide that carries the sound over long distances without significant loss in intensity. This means that those not in the immediate area of the proposed development will be impacted just as much as the nearby neighbors.

Widely researched, it has been shown that light pollution causes significant skyglow, obscures celestial views, disrupts nocturnal insect and wildlife behavior, and affects human health. Even with downward-directed and shielded lighting, at the scale this development will require, there will be light pollution. Wet asphalt will reflect light upward and out, and fog will cause significant light scattering. As an avid backyard astronomer, I like dark sky. It is one of the reasons we moved here so please don't take that away from me.

One of the criteria for granting a conditional use permit is that "the proposed use does not seriously interfere with uses on adjacent property, with the character of the area, or with the purpose of the zone." As previous stated, my wife and I own the property immediately adjacent to the applicants boarding to the west, with "adjacent" being a key word. Increased traffic, noise and light pollution are just a few examples of how this development will seriously interfere with the use our property and change the rural character of the area. With that I request that the conditional use permit and variance application be denied.

Regards,  
Patrick Gorman  
3402 NW Knollwood Dr, Albany, OR

**From:** [Karen Cunagin](#)  
**To:** [WRIGHT James](#)  
**Subject:** Powers Property North Albany  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 24, 2026 7:54:05 AM

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Dear county friends,

I purchased a home here 6 years ago because it was in an established old neighborhood with views to the south and east. Now the south has a huge motor home parked in line with my kitchen window and the east field has a large new home on it.

Of course I was disappointed with these changes, but it is my neighbors' land and their choice to alter the course. I'd rather appreciate what beauty remains than ruin our relationships.

People are more valuable than property in my eye.

Northside Church desires to build on the Powers property to serve its family and the community as a whole. Not only will there be meeting space, but sports fields and perhaps a desirable day care facility. There will be change somehow for this neighborhood. I hope they'll find contentment with this presence of good will and a resource for their lives.

Thanks for your service to our county.

Blessings on you,

Karen Cunagin

Karen Cunagin  
Millefleur Fiber Arts  
art and education

[karencunagin.com](http://karencunagin.com)

<http://www.etsy.com/shop/MillefleurFiberArts>

**From:** [Chelsey Vatoskay](#)  
**To:** [Benton Public Comment](#); [WRIGHT James](#)  
**Subject:** Public feedback Lu-25-067, Lu-25-066  
**Date:** Friday, March 20, 2026 10:43:46 AM

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## Planning Commission - Community Development

Re: LU-25-067 & LU-25-066

I am in very strong opposition of the proposed church campus on Powers Ave.

I live in the surrounding neighborhood but utilize Powers Ave for walking. If you aren't familiar with our area, none of the streets in this rural neighborhood are planned for heavy usage (it's deemed "rural" for a reason). My house sits on a small road that is not paved or county maintained, directly off of Oak Grove Drive. I try not to walk along Oak Grove as much as possible because it is very unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists. Cars travel at very high speeds, there is no shoulder on either side and there are steep drop offs. Instead, we walk to the Dumbeck/Terrace neighborhood directly behind our home and walk along Powers (which is essentially a 1 lane road). These small roads are primarily used only by the neighborhood residents (as it is not a main thoroughfare, unlike Oak Grove and Scenic). All the residents are aware of the road situation and specifically moved to this neighborhood for the country feel. They always slow down, move over, wave, and make sure that walkers and cyclists are safe on Powers. If the church campus is approved, it will COMPLETELY change the neighborhood. Traffic WILL dramatically increase. And not just on Sunday. Child care, bible study, gym usage, amphitheater, pickleball and all the other activities they want to "benefit" the community will double the daily traffic on Powers (by their own calculations). It will definitely ruin the country, rural feel. It will certainly have environmental impacts, even if deemed small by the studies that were paid for. Water will certainly run from the property (& large septic leach fields) to the property's creek into the neighboring lake. Time will tell how large the actual environmental impacts will be. It will run off wildlife (including mice, which will definitely decide to move into people's homes). The church will make it more unsafe for the residents - from increased traffic, an almost guarantee of more accidents on the corner of Scenic/Powers and the icy roads of Scenic each winter, and more strangers in the neighborhood.

I feel badly for the immediate neighbors that this will directly affect (who I applaud for speaking up at the county meeting on 3/17). Lights will be on constantly, construction noise, noise from the hundreds of people visiting the campus and amplified in their amphitheater, acres of concrete, and a monstrosity of a structure (bigger than any of our North Albany schools) in the middle of country houses and acreage. Wildlife and the quiet nature feel will be replaced with people, noise and lights. I'm guessing the majority of the actual direct neighbors of this property would rather have 9 houses built on the property than this proposed mega-church campus. (Did the church even bother to ask the neighbors?) And to top it off - homeowners will be asked to give up some of their land for a major road improvement that would only be needed because of this church. If neighbors do not give up the land that they legally own, how does that work? Will the church still be built, but make the

neighborhood even more unsafe and unenjoyable for residents? Mature trees, landscaping, farm stands, mailboxes and a little library will all need to be removed if the road is expanded for the huge increase in traffic.

If the parking variance is approved, cars will have no choice but to park along the road - like they do at Oak Grove Elementary. Easter, Christmas and trunk-or-treat bring in hundreds of extra people all at the same time. We know - we see it year after year. But the difference is its current location can handle the overflow because the school and roadway were designed for that. Their plans to expand their congregation guarantees even more cars. The proposed relocation site does not work, and cannot work without the help of the Powers residents (many of whom have stated they absolutely will not give up their land). The large acreage property right next to Oak Grove Elementary is currently for sale if they are set on being in this immediate area. The old Tom's Garden Center is also another feasible option in North Albany.

The church says their goal is to serve the community - but building at this particular location destroys our rural neighborhood community. This campus needs to be built in a more suitable area with better transportation options other than just getting there by a car. There is a reason why the company doing the comparables had to expand their search all the way down to Eugene to find a similar situation. There is nothing like this in Albany or Corvallis. Building a massive church campus in a RR2 rural farm neighborhood is a terrible idea. Please listen to the residents of this neighborhood and deny the request.

Chelsey Vatoskay  
5085 NW Oak Hills Drive  
13 year resident - Household of 11 (who all oppose)

**From:** [Krier Comcast](#)  
**To:** [WRIGHT James](#)  
**Subject:** Re:Northside Christian Church Review  
**Date:** Thursday, March 19, 2026 10:36:09 PM

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My apologies for the late communication in missing the review of this proposed development. I became aware from Hasso H's FB post.

I live on Oak Hills off Oak Grove ... with Dumbeck between us and Powers. We walk Powers on average three times a week in our cycle of walks.

Concerns:

- Safety. Even with proposed 50 ft minimum, the margin will be small for the amount of extra traffic it will generate. As it is now, I often have to angle down the ditch wall to make way for big vehicles.
- Cost. I live on a county road me/neighbors maintain. In fairness, it is essential if this is approved that the county/taxpayers assume NO cost and ALL road improvements are fulfilled by applicant. Frankly, Oak Grove should also be improved as that is a key road to get to this location. Or, the entry should be considered from Scenic since it is a better road and would have less impact than on the already almost marginless Oak Grove.
- Parking. I fully appreciate the county report on required parking. Please don't compromise. Driving past Oak Grove during current church services and school parent events is a complete hazard. I have no idea how that got approved through the county. The parking is inadequate.
- Not a fit with quiet, rural residential feel (and infrastructure.)This pastoral setting will be negatively impacted for all who chose to live in this rural setting.

Finally, if there are notices pertaining to planning reviews in this area, please add me to the mailing list as I did not receive any notification about this until I saw it mentioned on Facebook.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration in this review.

Jeanne Krier  
4974 NW Oak Hills  
Albany, Or 97321

Sent from my iPhone

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Rich Olson](#)  
**To:** [WRIGHT James](#)  
**Subject:** LU-25-067  
**Date:** Thursday, March 19, 2026 3:59:03 PM

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Board of Commisioners,

Two points in opposition:

First, we echo the concerns expressed during public testimony in that it changes the character and nature of the rural neighborhood. Note, this area is zoned as Rural/residential and the proposed church does not feel like a small community church. Rather, it feels more like an urban mega-church and would result in significantly more consolidated traffic as compared to single family homes thereby raising the risk factor at the intersections of Scenic Dr. and Oak Grove Dr. As suggested during the public comments, it may be more appropriate located within the urban growth boundary.

Second, if approved, it would be imperative that the road improvements be made prior to construction in order to ensure public safety for those utilizing that road during construction and beyond. Because churches are exempt from property taxes the burden of cost to maintain a safe travel environment should not be placed on local property owners and we do not feel this presents an undue burden on the part of the applicant.

Respectfully,

Mary & Rich Olson  
3567 Scenic Dr. NW  
Albany, OR 97321

**From:** [Rich Olson](#)  
**To:** [WRIGHT James](#)  
**Subject:** LU-25-067  
**Date:** Saturday, March 21, 2026 9:27:12 AM

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## Board of Commisioners/Planning

To follow up on my previous letter I needed to add this observation in opposition. I have tried to remain objective about this proposal; but, as I stood on our property from the end of Powers and tried to visualize the scale of the proposed church I came to the realization that it would not fit the local environment. This is not a structure that would blend in and compliment the local area; rather it would 'dominate' the area. That's not what people living here are looking for and does not seem like a good long term plan.

Respectfully,

Rich Olson  
3567 Scenic Dr. NW  
Albany, OR 97321

From: Richard Mikelson <[rcmc82@yahoo.com](mailto:rcmc82@yahoo.com)>

Subject: Proposed Action LU-25-067-CUP

Message Body:

I'm opposed to the proposed church at 4500 Powers St. in north Albany .

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This e-mail was sent from a contact form on Community Development, Benton County, Oregon (<https://cd.bentoncountyor.gov>)

Submitter's IP Address: 73.164.247.238

Sally Lynn Clark  
3203 NW Terrace Dr.  
Albany, OR 97321  
(530) 708-0042

March 23, 2026

Benton County Planning Commission  
publiccomment@bentoncountyor.gov  
Proposed Actions:  
LU-25-067 CUP - Northside Christian Church  
LU-25-066 CUP - Variance Parking Standard

Dear Planning Commissioners,

I attended the last meeting on March 17<sup>th</sup>, on Zoom, and carefully listened to the comments given by the parties involved. There were some thorough reports and some shoddy work done, especially in comparing this rural “church” plan to ones in Eugene, or that there could be 100 houses built on these 20 acres, which have a 2-acre minimum and a current wetland. I feel like the public is at a disadvantage, because the county has been working with Northside Christian Church for some time before we were even made aware of the project. This has allowed the church and country to become invested in the endeavor. The proposal, however, is not suitable for the current location. You cannot make a decision of this magnitude based on the wishful thinking of the applicant. You must follow current law and regulations.

Here are some of my greatest concerns. This is not just a small, rural church. Even the representative from Northside Christian referred to it as a campus. The main church building square footage is equivalent to the footprint of Oak Grove Elementary School, its gymnasium and cafeteria combined! The church’s gymnasium has square footage more than twice the footprint of the Oak Grove gymnasium, which serves an entire school full of children! Additionally, there will be a storage structure (larger than my house), plus pickle ball courts, amphitheater, playground, etc. The size of the proposed campus is huge. It will totally change the essential nature of the neighborhood.

With the church campus, comes the large area of required parking, an extensive area of concrete. The run-off from rain will need to be managed, as it will no longer be naturally absorbed into the ground and the adjacent wetland areas will have already reached

saturation in heavy rains. They are asking for a variance on parking. Yes, it would be nice if the parking lot was tiny, but a variance cannot be given. It cannot be given for safety reasons, as there is no room for overflow parking on the road. It cannot be given for legal reasons, as a variance requires adherence to the criteria regarding changing the essential nature of the area. Any parking lot in the middle of a rural neighborhood will change the essential nature of the area.

Noise and lighting are other factors to consider when deciding if an endeavor of this magnitude will change the nature of the area. The lighting for the parking and buildings, even if it is pointed downward, will be much more than a few houses would generate on this property. I was disappointed in the comment made by the applicant regarding noise, i.e. there is no noise regulation. It shows smugness and disregard for the community who moved here for quiet and the lack of city lights.

The loss of habitat to the local wildlife population will be sizeable. The deer use the field extensively. People who have lived in the area for many decades have mentioned that the deer population increased in our neighborhood, as they were pushed out of their habitat due to the development of housing between NW Gibson Hill Road and NW Scenic Road. Even with the field, they still need to rely on our home landscaping for survival. The large church campus will further dislocate the local deer population, will increase the amount of human to wildlife interaction and increase the need of deer to use our yard vegetation even more just to survive. My neighbors and I do not want that to happen.

The field is a foraging area for bald eagles. I took the picture of the bald eagle in the field, that was included in a letter submitted by Erika Wolters and neighbors prior to the first meeting. The eagles are nesting within a half mile of the property. I have watched them conduct their courtship ritual flying above my home. The parking and structures will affect the habitat available to the eagles. There will also be an excessive disturbance factor to the eagles and local wildlife with large numbers of cars and people entering, exiting and using the property on a daily basis.

Finally, the road – the road that is so narrow that it is difficult for two pick-up trucks to pass in opposite directions. There is no shoulder. People using the road for recreation watch for cars and, fortunately, the traffic is infrequent. Drivers are usually polite, slow down and pull into the opposite lane to give space to walkers, runners, children, dogs, strollers, etc. If the Northside Church proposal is approved, it can only be approved if extensive upgrades are made to the road. You cannot decide to allow a minimal upgrade that does not meet the standards required by law, just to pacify the applicant. You cannot decide that the church

does not have to pay for the upgrades, prior to any construction. The Northside Church proposal for the Powers Avenue location is not viable. Will such a campus and 10 years of construction change the essential character of the neighborhood. Of course it will. With that said, no variance can be allowed. Either Northside Church follows all the required laws and regulations or they should find another location that is more amenable to the proposal.

As commissioners, you are public officials that hold the public trust. We need to be able to trust you to follow the current laws and not to bend them to lessen any burden which might be placed on the applicant. It is the applicant who has chosen to build a giant complex in the middle of a rural neighborhood, and the neighborhood is not happy about it. People do not always have time to attend meetings and write letters. That is why we need to trust our commissioners to follow all laws and regulations and not bend the rules.

One last note. While parishioners would be enjoying their amphitheater, looking into the woods with their sound system blaring, the neighbors will not. We will not enjoy looking down on the huge campus. We will not enjoy listening to the noise. We will not enjoy the traffic and total disruption of the neighborhood. It is presumptuous of them to assume that we will all be excited to join their church, as they seem to think we will. Many of us already go to other churches. They really need to rethink this application for Powers Avenue and build their church in a more practical location that could easily handle an endeavor of this magnitude.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sally Lynn Clark".

Sally Lynn Clark

**From:** [Danny Paoff](#)  
**To:** [WRIGHT James](#)  
**Subject:** Support for Church Building Project – Case #LU-25-067  
**Date:** Saturday, March 21, 2026 3:39:30 PM

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Dear Mr. Wright,

I am writing to provide support for the proposed church development under Case #LU-25-067, with consideration to applicable Benton County land use criteria, including compatibility with surrounding uses, adequacy of public facilities, and proportionality of required improvements.

The current application is limited to Phase One and is appropriately scaled to the existing level of use. The congregation averages approximately 380 attendees, with observed peak parking demand of approximately 140 vehicles. The proposed parking supply (260+ spaces) exceeds anticipated demand and demonstrates compliance with off-street parking requirements while minimizing the potential for overflow onto adjacent roadways. This directly supports findings related to transportation adequacy and site functionality.

The site plan reflects deliberate design measures to ensure compatibility with the surrounding area, consistent with Benton County's approval criteria. The building footprint is reduced through a two-story configuration (approximately 9,000 square feet at grade), limiting site coverage and bulk impacts. In addition, the structure is situated toward the rear of the property and within a lower topographic area, which reduces noticeability from the public right-of-way and helps maintain the existing character of the neighborhood.

The proposal also provides a community serving use that addresses an identified local need. In addition to religious assembly, the facility has the potential to support childcare/daycare services, which are currently limited in the surrounding area. This type of use is consistent with community service objectives and can reduce vehicle miles traveled by providing services closer to area residents.

From a safety and transportation standpoint, the proposed development represents an improvement over existing conditions. Our group currently meets at a school facility where parking is accommodated along a relatively busy roadway, creating potential conflicts between pedestrians and through traffic. The proposed site design consolidates parking on-site and reduces reliance on roadside parking, thereby improving overall traffic safety and circulation.

With respect to roadway improvement requirements, it is important that any conditions of approval meet the standards of nexus and proportionality. Requiring the applicant to fund widening of an existing roadway that currently does not meet County standards appears disproportionate to the traffic impacts associated with Phase One of this development. Considering the modest scale of the current proposal and the available on-site parking capacity, such a requirement may exceed what is reasonably attributable to the project and could impose an undue burden relative to its impact.

In summary, the proposed Phase One development is consistent with Benton County land use criteria related to compatibility, public facilities, and community need. The project has been designed to minimize impacts while providing a beneficial service to the area. Based on these considerations, I respectfully support approval of this application.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kind Regards,  
Danny Paoff

**From:** [Jonathan Powell](#)  
**To:** [WRIGHT James](#)  
**Subject:** Support for LU-25-067 Northside Church  
**Date:** Friday, March 20, 2026 5:58:05 PM

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To the Benton County Planning Commission,

I live in the North Albany area and would like to express my support for the Northside Church proposal on Powers Road. I regularly travel Powers Road and Scenic Drive when I do drop off or pick-up from my kid's school at Santiam Christian. Based on my experience in the area, most traffic in this part of North Albany is local in nature and adding a church (which primarily meets on Sunday mornings) would not interfere with local traffic.

Further, church activities occur primarily at scheduled times (inside the buildings) and the structures (while sizable from a square footage perspective) are designed in a very efficient manner (smaller footprint and single-story view from Powers) that preserves much of the property as open space and fits within the rural character of the area. The entire tree stand on the hillside appears to be left in its natural state. The same is true for all water drainages and large portion of open fields in the southeast corner of the property. In fact, the entire southern portion of the property appears to be left completely natural.

While there has been lots of unfounded claims made online to the contrary, I believe those to be wildly inaccurate characterizations of the design plans, attempting only to garner fear and attention by a select few.

I believe this project will be additive to the North Albany community as a whole, including the community surrounding Powers Road. Please approve this proposed plan.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Powell  
2768 Amble Side St NW  
Albany, OR 97321

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From: Susan Holling <[stholling@gmail.com](mailto:stholling@gmail.com)>  
Subject: proposed church building on Scenic and Powers

Sent For: Board of Commissioners <[bocinfo@bentoncountyor.gov](mailto:bocinfo@bentoncountyor.gov)>

Message Body:

I was appalled to read in the ADH about the proposed church planned for Scenic Drive and Powers in North Albany. I have lived on Eagle View, just around the corner from Powers, for just under 40 years. This is a very special area. Quiet, rural, dark at night, full of wildlife. Any kind of church does not belong here. It should be closer to town. Just up Scenic, near the nursery and winery, there is a major deer crossing. People drive too fast and a few are hit every year. There are many issues that don't make sense: Septic tanks are needed out here and the soil is terrible for drainage. There is no more water hook up allowed. A well would have to be dug. Widening Powers would be a mess and very expensive. There is a lovely barn on the property. Leave it there. The birds like it. The whole character of this area would be changed. Forever. The idea of putting in 700 parking spaces makes me sick. We like it the way it is around here.

I keep hearing in my head a song that Joni Mitchell wrote and sang many years ago:

"THEY PAVED PARADISE AND PUT UP A PARKING LOT."

I respectfully ask you, PLEASE DO NOT APPROVE THIS PROPOSAL!

Susan Holling

Ross Jackson Testimony for LU-25-067  
3935 NW Terra Lynda DR, North Albany

Thank you, Commissioners, for considering my testimony.

I attended the Public Hearing on Tuesday evening for the Northside Christian Church proposal. I have lived at this address for 36 years and I ask that you deny based on my additional thoughts.

Widening the street, Powers:

- The residents walk facing oncoming traffic, and the discussion included a plan to add a gravel walkway only on the South side. The road has some changes in elevations that obstruct driver view when approaching a pedestrian and possible oncoming car, which elevates the danger issues dramatically. I seldom drive over 30 for this reason.
- You mentioned that the trees have already been marked for removal, which would remove shade on the street during the summer months. My dogs rush across the non-shaded areas to get to shaded areas that are significantly cooler on their feet. Additionally, the breeze in the shaded areas cools the environment.
- There are people living on Scenic and Oak Grove that test their race vehicles on Powers, doing burnouts. I believe that having a nice new wider surface will draw more of that activity, adding both to the danger and to noise pollution.
- I suggest that the right-of-way costs should be known before giving your approval. The cost of land in the area is very high, and some residents may be non-negotiable.

Water issues on Spring Hill (the area):

- Spring water flows in the ditches, even in dry periods. There is a spring under Powers near the intersection with Scenic that has required county repairs, and repairs are needed now. The power of that spring erodes under the pavement within a couple of years after repairs are made.
- During the heavy rain at the end of February, Powers was closed in the proposed area due to standing water. With moderate rains water runs across the street, causing sudden slowing and sometimes hydroplaning.
- The proposed Eastern lot had standing water on Wednesday after two days without rain. Saturation of the top soil is enhanced by the hillside clay underneath. The gray clay that folks use to seal ponds is as little as 2 feet down, preventing drainage.
  - The clay raises a major issue with a large septic system.
  - I suggest that Perk Test results be obtained before a decision is made.

Traffic:

- Accessing Powers from the side streets will be an issue due to activities at the site, even with the wider lanes.
- I think of the intersection of Ryals turning onto Independence Highway, and during peak times, making the turn to the left requires long wait times. Folks get impatient with the wait and do something stupid to make the turn, elevating the danger.

I support all the pollution and safety arguments given in opposition, and for these additional reasons, I request a **DENIAL** of the location for a large church.

**From:** [Trent Hanson](#)  
**To:** [WRIGHT James](#)  
**Subject:** Case #LU-25-067 Northside Church  
**Date:** Saturday, March 21, 2026 8:40:17 PM

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Dear James and Members of the Benton County Planning Commission,

My name is Trent Hanson and my family lives in North Albany, not far from the proposed site at 1405 Powers Avenue. I am writing in support of the Conditional Use Permit for the Northside Church project (Case No. LU-25-067) and to respectfully ask the Commission to approve the requested zoning accommodation.

We have followed this process closely, and we believe this project deserves approval. I would like to address a few of the concerns that have been raised.

Regarding community character:

I understand that some neighbors are concerned about a change in the feel of the area, and I think that concern deserves a thoughtful response. What is actually being requested is approval of Phase 1 only, a building with a footprint of approximately 9,000 square feet set well back from the road and intentionally sited on lower ground to reduce its visibility.

Landscaping is planned specifically to help preserve the rural aesthetic. The design team has clearly asked the question at every step: how do we build something that is hospitable to the people already here? That kind of neighborly approach is rare, and it should be recognized.

Regarding traffic and parking:

Northside is currently averaging around 380 attendees, not the 500 figure that may have been cited in earlier discussions. This matters because it directly affects the traffic impact analysis. Last Sunday, the church counted approximately 140 cars. Phase 1 includes a parking lot designed for 260+ vehicles, nearly double the current need. That is not a recipe for congestion; it is responsible planning with room to grow.

Regarding the road widening requirement:

I would respectfully ask the Commission to reconsider the condition that requires the church to fund the widening of Powers Avenue. The road already does not meet county standards. This is a condition that predates this application and exists independent of the church's presence. Requiring a single congregation, in the early stages of financing a new facility, to bear the cost of correcting a pre-existing public infrastructure deficiency is an undue financial burden. If the road needs to be brought up to standard, that is a question of public infrastructure funding, not a cost that should be placed on the shoulders of a faith community trying to build responsibly.

Regarding community value:

As neighbors, we believe this project will strengthen the area, not diminish it. The long-term plans include green space, a potential walking path, gym facilities, and possibly a daycare. These are amenities that serve the broader community, not just church members. Rural communities benefit enormously from gathering places that support families, youth, and

connection across generations. We have seen this firsthand, and we are hopeful that our neighbors will as well.

It is worth the Commission's consideration that under the current RR-2 zoning, this 19-acre parcel could support nine or more residential dwellings by right. No variance, no public hearing, no conditions required. Nine homes would mean nine driveways onto Powers Avenue, nine families generating daily vehicle trips throughout the week, permanent division of the land into private parcels, and a lasting change to the open character of the property. By contrast, the church's Phase 1 proposal concentrates activity in a single, well-designed structure, preserves the majority of the acreage as open space, and generates meaningful traffic only during limited, predictable windows, primarily on Sunday mornings. Those concerned about the neighborhood's rural feel should weigh what the land could become under its current zoning against what the church is actually proposing.

We respectfully urge the Commission to approve Case No. LU-25-067 and allow Northside Church to move forward with Phase 1. This congregation has worked in good faith to be a good neighbor before they have even broken ground. That is exactly the kind of community partner we want in North Albany.

Thank you for your time and your service to our county.

Sincerely,

Trent Hanson  
North Albany/Benton County Resident

**From:** [Trent Hanson](#)  
**To:** [WRIGHT James](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Case #LU-25-067 Northside Church  
**Date:** Saturday, March 21, 2026 9:46:49 PM

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I would like to clarify that in review I see that the road widening requirement has only been discussed. I stand by my comments that this should not be a cost solely placed on the church. As long as their driveway approach meets the requirements, the county road has been deemed acceptable as-is for public use.

Trent

On Sat, Mar 21, 2026 at 8:40 PM Trent Hanson <[trent.jaymes.hanson@gmail.com](mailto:trent.jaymes.hanson@gmail.com)> wrote:

Dear James and Members of the Benton County Planning Commission,

My name is Trent Hanson and my family lives in North Albany, not far from the proposed site at 1405 Powers Avenue. I am writing in support of the Conditional Use Permit for the Northside Church project (Case No. LU-25-067) and to respectfully ask the Commission to approve the requested zoning accommodation.

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Landscaping is planned specifically to help preserve the rural aesthetic. The design team has clearly asked the question at every step: how do we build something that is hospitable to the people already here? That kind of neighborly approach is rare, and it should be recognized.

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infrastructure funding, not a cost that should be placed on the shoulders of a faith community trying to build responsibly.

Regarding community value:

As neighbors, we believe this project will strengthen the area, not diminish it. The long-term plans include green space, a potential walking path, gym facilities, and possibly a daycare. These are amenities that serve the broader community, not just church members. Rural communities benefit enormously from gathering places that support families, youth, and connection across generations. We have seen this firsthand, and we are hopeful that our neighbors will as well.

It is worth the Commission's consideration that under the current RR-2 zoning, this 19-acre parcel could support nine or more residential dwellings by right. No variance, no public hearing, no conditions required. Nine homes would mean nine driveways onto Powers Avenue, nine families generating daily vehicle trips throughout the week, permanent division of the land into private parcels, and a lasting change to the open character of the property. By contrast, the church's Phase 1 proposal concentrates activity in a single, well-designed structure, preserves the majority of the acreage as open space, and generates meaningful traffic only during limited, predictable windows, primarily on Sunday mornings. Those concerned about the neighborhood's rural feel should weigh what the land could become under its current zoning against what the church is actually proposing.

We respectfully urge the Commission to approve Case No. LU-25-067 and allow Northside Church to move forward with Phase 1. This congregation has worked in good faith to be a good neighbor before they have even broken ground. That is exactly the kind of community partner we want in North Albany.

Thank you for your time and your service to our county.

Sincerely,

Trent Hanson  
North Albany/Benton County Resident

Re: LU-25-067 and LU-25-066 at 4500 Powers Ave NW

Our family moved to our current property on Dumbeck Ave nearly six years ago, after the acreage behind our previous home was sold and approved for development of hundreds of new homes. The peace of our rural, dead-end gravel road acreage no longer existed. We knew that in order to keep that peaceful, rural character, we would need to move outside of city limits where development was limited.

Now that is at risk once again due to this proposal. There is no doubt that paving a large portion of a 20-acre green pasture to build a 75,000 square feet, multi-building church campus (that will also conduct daily commercial business) would drastically change the character of the surrounding area. To put into perspective the scale of this project, Coastal Farm & Ranch in Corvallis is 57,000 square feet. This church campus would be 30% larger than that building. It's enormous, and it would be smack dab in the middle of a rural residential area. The Planning Department's report lists a number of churches that are used as comparatives to support their finding that "the proposal maintains the overall rural residential character of the area." However, only **one** of the churches listed is in a Rural Residential neighborhood – the rest are in urban and commercial zones. And the one that is zoned RR is smaller than 4000 square feet – likely fitting in quite nicely with the size of homes in their area. These are not apples to apples comparisons.

It's strange that this question of "rural character" is even a debate, as I would assume that any person would concede that paving a 20 acre green field and constructing one of the largest churches to exist in the Albany/Corvallis region **will** change the character of the area. Substantially increasing traffic on a rural local access road **will** change the character of the area. Establishing a non-residential organization on a campus that conducts daily commercial activities in a supermarket-sized building **will** change the character of the area.

The staff report lays out many of the issues of Powers Road and indicates that it "does not meet current minimum roadway or right of way standards". The posted speed limit of 45 MPH is entirely unrealistic, as those of us who drive this road daily know that driving that fast causes too much risk for hitting pedestrians, dogs, strollers, deer, and oncoming traffic at the blind crest. The road improvements that the staff reports suggest make sense, although it doesn't solve the entire problem. It provides more incentive for people to drive faster and more carelessly. It also provides an area for church attendees to park on the side of the road. At their current location, every Sunday, vehicles line both sides of Oak Grove Drive, blocking shoulders and bike paths (which are cordoned off by permanent delineators and rumble strips to prevent vehicle use). The church, the City, and the County have failed

to manage this issue, even though parking in bike lanes is illegal and unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists. Why would the new location be any different?

There is also some disagreement about how much traffic would really increase if this church is constructed. In the March 17 meeting, the church's traffic analyst suggested that there would be an additional 300 trips on weekdays and 500 trips on Sundays – a total of 2000 trips per week. The last traffic analysis of Powers indicated a weekly trip count around 4700. This would be a 43% increase in traffic due to the church. Worth noting is the fact that the 2000 trip estimate is based on current church membership; it does not take into account additional uses of the space and increased church attendance. The church's website lists a large number of potential uses for the property including kids camps, after school programs, preschool, daycare, midweek community building activities, organized sports, cultural events, and performances in the outdoor amphitheater.

The church's website says they have weekly attendance of nearly 400 members and have held services for over 700 people on holidays. This seems to exceed the capacity of a 650 person septic, but I'm not an expert on that matter. What concerns me more are the numbers they are planning and building for. A church of 400 people doesn't need nearly 75,000 square feet. It's safe to assume they are building this church with the belief that their attendance will drastically increase. A sanctuary for 650 in the main building – a space meant to accommodate adults while their children are spread out in other rooms in the building. 650 is not the capacity of the building at any given time.

I am also concerned about the environmental impact of this project. On this property is a seasonal stream, classified by US Fish & Wildlife as a Riverine habitat; a type of wetland. This stream flows into a Freshwater Emergent Wetland on adjoining properties, which then feeds into a Freshwater Pond (Lakeview Lake). Overflow from the pond flows into another Riverine habitat and ends in a Freshwater Forested Wetland. All of this to say that the staff report doesn't adequately address the potential environmental impact at all. These wetlands are frequented by so many species, including bald eagles, beavers, deer, and bobcats. Sediment runoff, chemical contamination, potential flooding due to stormwater runoff are all effects of construction. Currently, residents of the Lakeview Estates HOA maintain the water level of Lakeview Lake, through a rudimentary overflow system that works for the current volume. The property on Powers holds a large amount of ground water, keeping it from flowing downstream. Today when I drove by Powers, I noticed that the field is still covered in large pools of water, even though it has not rained in the past 7 days and the rainfall this year is well below average. The large increase in stormwater runoff that will most definitely happen after paving 5+ acres of that property may overwhelm the system and cause extensive damage to surrounding properties, as well as a large financial

burden to homeowners downstream to fix this problem. These concerns need to be addressed.

Lastly, I want to appeal to the leadership of Northside Church. We have several close friends that attend your church (some of whom are actually opposed to this proposal). I know that your members value community and being good neighbors. Please listen to your neighbors. This campus **will** negatively impact the character of our neighborhood, safety on the road, access to our homes while road and utility improvements are being completed, noise levels from long-term construction, wildlife in the area, wetlands around our homes, property values, and more. You have read or heard testimony from a large percentage of homeowners in the area opposed to this plan, and very few in favor. The only people who have stated they are in favor either don't live in the neighborhood or are members of your church. Please reconsider your plans to build a church on this property.

Angela & Luke Hendrickson  
4890 NW Dumbeck Ave

**From:** "Benton County Assessment, Oregon" <[noreply\\_wordpress@bentoncountyor.gov](mailto:noreply_wordpress@bentoncountyor.gov)>  
**Date:** March 22, 2026 at 6:46:31 PM PDT  
**To:** \*Benton Web Assessment <[assessmentinfo@bentoncountyor.gov](mailto:assessmentinfo@bentoncountyor.gov)>  
**Subject:** Benton County Assessment, Oregon "Comments against LU 24-017"  
**Reply-To:** [noreply\\_wordpress@bentoncountyor.gov](mailto:noreply_wordpress@bentoncountyor.gov)

From: Chris Beatty <[christophercbeatty@gmail.com](mailto:christophercbeatty@gmail.com)>

Subject: Comments against LU 24-017

Message Body:

I am submitting comments against the proposal to build the Northside Christian Church at 4500 Powers Ave NW. This area is zoned RR2 and it is inappropriate to put a massive structure such as this in a rural residential neighborhood. The proposal is very problematic for several reasons:

- Zoning. As mentioned, this proposal would require a variance or Conditional Use Permit. There is not a good reason to grant it – it simply does not fit with the character of the neighborhood.
- Traffic. The traffic load on Powers, Oak Grove, and Scenic Drive would all be substantially increased and congestion would result even if improvements are made to the roads. Walking and biking in the neighborhood will be more dangerous and less enjoyable, especially on weekends.
- Wetlands/creek drainages. Two seasonal creeks drain the property and feed the pond below. Small local ponds such as the one near the subject property are a valuable resource for sustaining local populations of amphibians, birds, and insects. Water quality degradation from parking lot and other impervious surface runoff is very likely and will jeopardize aquatic species.
- Septic/sewer. Unless a massive infrastructure project is undertaken, the site would have to use a very large septic system which further risks the water quality downstream.
- Asset utilization. Why build more big buildings when there are many that are empty? The current usage at Oak Grove seems more sensible and there are other commercial buildings and even schools that are vacant. It would be better to use the 4500 property for homes or a park.

Thank you for your consideration.

Chris Beatty

## **Proposed Action: LU-25-067: CUP – Church and LU-25-066 Variance: Parking Standards**

March 22, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

We are writing to express, again, our strong opposition to the proposed church **AND** to allowing a variance to the church regarding parking. After attending the hearing on March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2026, it is clear that there are large discrepancies between the church proposal for a “campus” of buildings, the maximum capacity of the church itself of 500, which the applicant wants to use to assess parking and traffic requirements. The first building will be the auditorium, which the church members will use as the sanctuary initially. Then, the actual church will be built, in addition to some other structures. It is very clear that while the church itself may only hold 500 people, the potential for more people being on site (e.g., using the auditorium, pickle ball courts, amphitheater, etc.) is evident from the plans of the “campus” alone. This also does not include special events the church may hold (e.g., Easter egg hunts, trick-or-treat events, etc.) where more people will likely be drawn to the “campus”. This will inevitably increase their parking needs and go well beyond the 269 parking spaces they want a variance for.

Benton County requires the church to have 736 spaces, according to code. Even if there is a variance allowed to the applicant for fewer spaces, by their own admission they acknowledge that more spaces will erode, “...the rural residential character envisioned for the RR-2 zone” (page 25 Staff Report to the Planning Commission). Bottom line, the applicant says building out the required number of parking places would erode the rural residential character, and the Staff report states this is not a sufficient hardship. It seems like this is evidence to reject the notion that this development would maintain rural residential character, as the applicant’s own words state that the parking requirements would erode the rural residential character envisioned for the RR-2 zone.

Further, from the discussions in the meeting, and according to the Staff Report, a “campus” of this size would require modifications to NW Powers Road (which is now, truly, a country road that is narrow and with little space on the road for maneuvering), which the applicants seemed unwilling to do at the March 17<sup>th</sup> meeting. This will require homeowners along NW Powers to give easement rights, which they may not do, especially in light of the overwhelming amount of opposition from people who live in the vicinity of this proposal.

Finally, it is truly striking the size and scope of this proposal. Make no mistake, this is a mega church. The idea that the applicant could get approval for this much built structures, parking lots, etc. is absurd for a designated rural residential area (RR-2 zone). It is nonsensical to make the case otherwise.

We are not opposed to a church going on that site, but not one of this size and scope that, in no way, honors the rural residential feel. At the March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2026, meeting, many neighbors of that parcel came out to express their opposition to this proposal. In fact, the opposition far outweighed the supporters. You have heard from people living on NW Powers, NW Terrace, and NW Dumbeck (and others), who are strongly opposed to this proposal. We all bought our houses

because of the rural feel. We do not want NW Powers to become another high-speed cut-through, nor do we want increased traffic, especially on weekends, when many of us are running, walking our dogs, etc. on NW Powers.

It is truly telling that the only rural residential church is St. Anne Orthodox Church in Corvallis, which was built a long time ago, and is significantly smaller in scope. The rest of the comparables were from non-rural areas, exemplifying that churches of this size are not generally approved for rural residential areas.

Much was discussed at the March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2026, meeting about water quality (especially of Lakeview Lake), traffic, light pollution, noise, disruption to habitat and wildlife corridors, etc. The nature of this meeting suggests that the applicant has not demonstrated a solid reason for their parking variance, except to say that if required to put in the number of parking places based on existing code, it would “erode” the rural character. We submit their entire plan will “erode” the rural character of the area and therefore does not meet the minimum standard of maintaining rural residential character. We strongly disagree with the Staff Report stating otherwise (page 9).

There is a reason why building codes were established, and that was to ensure that building proposals maintain a “fit” with the area, whether that is urban, rural, commercial, farmland, etc. This church proposal violates the code for rural residential due to its sheer size, required parking, and traffic impacts on NW Powers. All we are asking is that you deny the parking variance, and the overall size of this development. Again, we are not against the church. If they would like to build a smaller structure that aligns with rural residential character, the neighborhood would welcome them. As it stands now, this whole proposal feels out of size and scope of the area.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Erika and Ken Wolters  
4859 NW Dumbeck Ave  
Albany, Oregon 97321

I am a resident of North Albany and learned in today's newspaper (March 21, 2026) of the pending application by Northside Christian Church to convert 4500 Powers Avenue NW into a church and community center. Having lived around the corner of this property for the past 27 years, I can tell you that putting a church and community center in rural residential zoning will negatively change the character of the area. First, Powers Ave is barely wide enough to drive two cars. As I frequently bicycle along that road, I can tell you it will be a nightmare if there are hundreds of vehicles entering & exiting there not only every Sunday for services, but during the week as well with the planned community center. I've cycled past the Oak Grove elementary school where the church currently rents space on Sundays; the road is crowded with overflowing cars parked along the side of Oak Grove Drive. At least there is a decent bike trail along Oak Grove Drive for bikes and pedestrians by the school, which is not true further north on Oak Grove Drive or Powers Avenue. This application would also put a strain on the feeder streets (Scenic Drive and Oak Grove Drive) which are heavily used by pedestrians and cyclists. Lastly this application would greatly change the character of the rural residential area. We moved out here to escape the city and enjoy country life, with lots of wildlife and quiet. Putting a church and community center in this neighborhood will negatively impact both wildlife and solitude. Is it really permissible under Rural Residential to site such a large proposal? It would be much safer and appropriate in the more populated area of North Albany.

Laura Tully <[lori.a.tully@gmail.com](mailto:lori.a.tully@gmail.com)>

Ross Jackson Testimony for LU-25-067  
3935 NW Terra Lynda DR, North Albany

Thank you, Commissioners, for considering my testimony.

I attended the Public Hearing on Tuesday evening for the Northside Christian Church proposal. I have lived at this address for 36 years and I ask that you deny based on my additional thoughts.

Widening the street, Powers:

- The residents walk facing oncoming traffic, and the discussion included a plan to add a gravel walkway only on the South side. The road has some changes in elevations that obstruct driver view when approaching a pedestrian and possible oncoming car, which elevates the danger issues dramatically. I seldom drive over 30 for this reason.
- You mentioned that the trees have already been marked for removal, which would remove shade on the street during the summer months. My dogs rush across the non-shaded areas to get to shaded areas that are significantly cooler on their feet. Additionally, the breeze in the shaded areas cools the environment.
- There are people living on Scenic and Oak Grove that test their race vehicles on Powers, doing burnouts. I believe that having a nice new wider surface will draw more of that activity, adding both to the danger and to noise pollution.
- I suggest that the right-of-way costs should be known before giving your approval. The cost of land in the area is very high, and some residents may be non-negotiable.

Water issues on Spring Hill (the area):

- Spring water flows in the ditches, even in dry periods. There is a spring under Powers near the intersection with Scenic that has required county repairs, and repairs are needed now. The power of that spring erodes under the pavement within a couple of years after repairs are made.
- During the heavy rain at the end of February, Powers was closed in the proposed area due to standing water. With moderate rains water runs across the street, causing sudden slowing and sometimes hydroplaning.
- The proposed Eastern lot had standing water on Wednesday after two days without rain. Saturation of the top soil is enhanced by the hillside clay underneath. The gray clay that folks use to seal ponds is as little as 2 feet down, preventing drainage.
  - The clay raises a major issue with a large septic system.
  - I suggest that Perk Test results be obtained before a decision is made.

Traffic:

- Accessing Powers from the side streets will be an issue due to activities at the site, even with the wider lanes.
- I think of the intersection of Ryals turning onto Independence Highway, and during peak times, making the turn to the left requires long wait times. Folks get impatient with the wait and do something stupid to make the turn, elevating the danger.

I support all the pollution and safety arguments given in opposition, and for these additional reasons, I request a **DENIAL** of the location for a large church.

March 21, 2026

Benton County Community Development Department  
James Wright  
4500 SW Research Way  
Corvallis, OR 97333

From: Tony & Karen Smith  
4930 NW Dumbeck Ave  
Albany, OR 97321

Subject : LU-25-067, LU-25-066 – CUP- Church

I am submitting this written testimony as a formal opposition and appeal of the above conditional use permits.

I have already submitted verbal and other written opposition of this permit. I am still trying to get my point across that this proposed building is not just a little small country church and only has services on Sunday morning and is closed the rest of the week. Other peoples comments and understanding say that this church going in is not going to be disruptive to this area. They say “this a church and is used only for Sunday services.” This is not true.

But per words from the applicant they are are calling this facilities a **“church campus/compound.”**

And these proposed facilities does not fit into the rural area or feel on where this is going to be built.

The applicant is opposing some of the county staff recommendations for their building out in this rural area.

But they are the ones wanting to put this mega church and COMPOUND in this rural area. They are wanting to change the rural characteristic of this area.

First thing is that they would build a 18,902 ft building to hold 500 people. The applicant already stated that is where they would hold meetings and

church services and weekly daycare. Applicant is appealing having to change and do all updates on the whole road of Powers Ave. If they have people coming to these facilities from Corvallis or Adair Village area and Albany they would access this from Oak Grove Road. They **can not** make assumptions on how the general public will access their facilities. They are the ones proposing to put in this huge building compound and saying that the public can use these too. So they are going to be having a lot, hundreds and hundreds of people using this rural area and rural roads to use their facilities. Again this rural area is not the place for this large of a compound.

And then the proposed large 54,709 sq. ft mega church being built with seating for over 600 people. This is not a small rural church. Again after both of these large facilities are built. The church can do anything they want with them. I see that they can have the potential of renting these out. They can have at any given time have activities at these two building. As per other peoples comments that nobody is contesting that what the church does is bad and that they do good work and make people feel good but that just what they are proposing to bring to this particular rural setting is not the right area for the this use that they are wanting to build. The traffic and the feel for this rural area will be changed and not for the better. Again none of these are bad in anyway, but to have that many people in this rural area changes the characteristics of this land and the surrounding areas.

They could advertise that a particular band is going to come and play, have some performing acts or plays being put on, sermons being offered. Bringing in hundreds and hundreds of people wanting to attend these.

And there will be the DAILY activities at the church itself, like youth activities during the evenings and weekends, choir practice, band-music practice, board meetings, bible study groups, children activities, evening confirmation classes, women's and men's group meetings, sewing-craft classes. And also outside groups using this facilities, like Boy Scout or Girls Scout groups, political groups, second language, school groups these would most likely be held during the week and in the evening hours.

Then you have the special community events that could be held like Easter egg hunts, Halloween Trick or treat events, an special Christmas activities and bazaars. Hundreds of people coming into this

area to use their facilities.

Also they plan on putting in a commercial grade kitchen in their main church building. Again the potential of having other people other than the church goers using this and having large gathering at this facility.

And the use of gym and other outside areas that are proposed to be built could have the same thing with having large amount of people coming in for events that can be held at these facilities. This is in a rural area and is not close to any public transportation and walking to this site would be a challenge for anyone trying to get to it from any of the rural roads that are on either side of it. So everyone would be needing to drive to get to it.

Again drawing hundreds and hundreds of people out in this rural area using the roads that were not designed and made for this type of daily use for activities during the day and night. This needs to be looked at not just as a Sunday morning church service and the church is locked up all week.

Activities will be going at these facilities every day and having evening use too. The change of this area with the building and parking lots, with the lights, and large pavement area. And having the water usage and public rest rooms facilities to be able to handle large groups of people gathering at one time should not put undo strain on existing properties.

I know there have been studies that show the amount of heat that parking lots produce along with the associated lighting would produce these again would change the use of this area and not for the good.

This proposed site is also home to a herd of up to a dozen deer and they travel all over the North Albany area. And use this acreage as their grazing and travel routes. My family has had some run ins with the deer popping up on Powers Ave. trying to cross the road. I wonder how many accidents will happen with the local wildlife in this area with hundreds of cars traveling to the church. What precautions are they going to take to not have deer, coyotes, foxes or any other wildlife coming onto the church grounds?

**Again I have to ask, is this a church going in or is this a business??**

Having a day care facility, I am sure this is not going to be free and will be charging fees for this. And being able to rent out their gym facilities and outdoor areas to groups to use and also the main church building with their commercial kitchen. Charging out side groups to come in and use this during the week and weekends, evening hours. Sounds like they are building two very large money making facilities than a church building to use for Sunday morning services only.

And again this is not the right location for these type of buildings and the potential use of the business side of bringing large groups of people to use their facilities.

And they are justifying that this would be for the community use but it comes at a costs and fees to use them, I am sure they will not be having groups use their facilities for free.

What guarantees do we have from the church once these two large building are built and what extent do they need to make them available to anybody in the community? They own them and can do with them what they want. Which brings a lot of questions to what could happen to this small rural area.

My family and others that reside in this rural community are not wanting this type of large mega church and church campus compound and business to be built on this property.

Please take in consideration of what the potential use and growth that this church compound and business could bring into this rural area. This is not the right location for the usage that could come from what they propose to build on this land. These buildings and usage will not complement the rural surrounding area. It will be a **MAJOR DETRIMENTAL** impact in this rural area.

We oppose and are appealing the conditional use permits to this property.

Sincerely,  
Tony & Karen Smith



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Benton County Planning Commission

**From:** Northside Christian Church Project Team

**Date:** March 31, 2026

**Subject:** LU-25-066 and LU-25-067

**Property:** 4500 NW Powers Avenue, Albany, Oregon

### I. PURPOSE

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This memorandum provides the applicant's response to comments contained in the Staff Report, the Public Works memorandum, and public testimony concerning the proposed Northside Christian Church project and is intended to assist the Planning Commission in applying the applicable approval criteria based on the evidentiary record.

The applicant has revised the proposal to eliminate Phase II and limit the request to Phase I, as indicated during the open record period and reflected in the supplemental materials submitted to the record, and the analysis herein reflects that reduced scope.

### II. APPLICANT POSITION ON APPROVAL OPTIONS

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The applicant supports Option 2, as outlined in the Staff Report, which limits approval to Phase I of the proposed development in response to concerns raised during the public hearing regarding traffic, project scale, and compatibility with the surrounding area. Limiting the request to Phase I allows the Commission to evaluate a reduced and more defined level of development and ensures that the decision is based on the portion of the project supported by the current record.

The applicant generally accepts the conditions of approval recommended by staff, subject to the clarifications and proposed modifications outlined in Section III (Proposed Edits to Conditions of Approval), including revisions related to transportation improvements.

### III. PROPOSED EDITS TO CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

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As discussed in Sections IV through VI, the following proposed edits are provided to ensure that the conditions of approval are necessary to mitigate impacts attributable to Phase I, are supported by applicable approval criteria, and satisfy nexus and proportionality requirements.

Unless modified below, all other conditions of approval recommended in the Staff Report are accepted as written.



#### A. PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS

The applicant requests the following modifications to the recommended conditions of approval. As demonstrated in the record, the required roadway improvements have not been shown to be attributable to, or necessary to mitigate, impacts associated with Phase I.

- Road Improvements (Condition 5): Remove the requirement for corridor-wide roadway improvements and application of a hybrid roadway standard.
- Road Improvements / Security (Condition 6): Remove or revise to eliminate requirements for construction or financial assurance associated with roadway improvements.
- Frontage Improvements (Condition 7): Revise to require a 5-foot right-of-way dedication along the frontage of the subject property only and remove any frontage improvement requirements.
- Phased Development (Condition 3): Revise to authorize Phase I only, consistent with the applicant's request and Option 2 in the Staff Report.

#### IV. ROADWAY IMPROVEMENT

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The Public Works memorandum requires roadway improvements to NW Powers Avenue extending from NW Scenic Drive to NW Oak Grove Drive and applies a hybrid roadway standard (Primary Local and Minor Collector).

##### A. PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES AND SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

NW Powers Avenue is classified as a Primary Local Access Road under the Benton County Transportation System Plan. This functional classification does not require or include dedicated pedestrian facilities such as sidewalks or separated pathways. The proposed hybrid improvement standard appears to introduce pedestrian-oriented design elements intended to address safety for non-motorized users; however, these elements exceed the requirements of the adopted functional classification and may encourage pedestrian use along a roadway that is not designed or intended to function as a pedestrian facility, potentially creating unintended safety risks.

Conditions of approval must mitigate impacts caused by the development and should not be used to remedy pre-existing deficiencies in the transportation system.

##### B. TRAFFIC VOLUMES AND ROADWAY FUNCTION

NW Powers Avenue is currently improved with two travel lanes, one in each direction, and functions as a low-volume rural roadway. The existing configuration is capable of accommodating current traffic volumes as well as the incremental increase in traffic associated with Phase I of the proposed development.



Evaluation of roadway improvements should be based on the impacts associated with Phase I of the development. Phase I represents a limited level of development and is not anticipated to generate traffic volumes that would necessitate corridor-wide roadway upgrades.

C. ENVIRONMENTAL AND PERMITTING IMPACTS

The roadway improvements required by the Public Works memorandum extend beyond the project frontage and would require alteration or filling of existing roadside drainage features along NW Powers Avenue. As documented in the Civil Plan Set (Exhibit D), wetlands and drainage features are present in the vicinity of the corridor. Disturbance of these features may constitute impacts to jurisdictional waters or wetlands subject to regulation by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Oregon Department of State Lands.

Implementation of the required improvements would therefore likely trigger federal and state removal-fill permitting, potential mitigation obligations, and associated costs, timelines, and regulatory uncertainty. These impacts are independent of, and not attributable to, Phase I of the proposed development.

The applicable approval criteria require that conditions of approval mitigate impacts caused by the proposed development. Here, the roadway improvements would introduce new environmental impacts and regulatory burdens that would not otherwise occur with Phase I, but instead result from attempts to address broader corridor conditions.

Requiring roadway improvements that introduce additional environmental permitting obligations and potential impacts beyond those caused by the proposed development further demonstrates that the conditions are not proportional to project impacts and raise significant feasibility concerns.

Accordingly, the wetland and permitting implications associated with the required roadway improvements underscore both the lack of proportionality and the feasibility constraints of the proposed conditions and support modification or removal of those requirements.

D. RIGHT-OF-WAY AND FEASIBILITY CONSTRAINTS

Development conditions must be limited to improvements necessary to address impacts attributable to the proposed development. While such improvements may extend beyond the project frontage where a clear nexus and proportional relationship can be demonstrated, the conditions proposed here go further.

The Development Code does not require application of a hybrid roadway standard or corridor-wide improvements for development of this scale. Conditions must be based on adopted standards rather than discretionary or project-specific design approaches.

The Public Works memorandum requires corridor-wide improvements to NW Powers Avenue extending from NW Scenic Drive to NW Oak Grove Drive, including widening the roadway to meet



a hybrid Primary Local / Minor Collector standard. These improvements are not limited to the project frontage and instead address broader corridor conditions.

Implementation of these improvements would require right-of-way acquisition from multiple properties not under the applicant's control. Northside Christian Church does not have the authority to acquire right-of-way from third parties, nor can it ensure delivery of improvements dependent on actions by unrelated property owners. Conditions that depend on acquisition of right-of-way from third-party properties outside the applicant's control are not reasonably enforceable and create uncertainty as to compliance.

Accordingly, while the applicant evaluated potential roadway improvements, the record does not demonstrate that improvements, including frontage improvements, are necessary to mitigate impacts attributable to Phase I. No roadway improvements have been identified that are both necessary and proportional to the impacts of the proposed development.

## V. APPLICABLE ANALYTICAL AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

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Land use decisions must be based on the Benton County Development Code and applicable adopted plans, including the Comprehensive Plan and Transportation System Plan.

The Staff Report references analytical requirements and roadway design concepts that are not explicitly required by the Development Code or adopted transportation planning documents, including:

- multiple rounds of seven-day traffic counts
- additional observation studies at comparison churches
- expanded Design Hourly Volume calculations
- application of a hybrid roadway improvement standard

These requirements and design concepts do not appear to be grounded in adopted code provisions or formally adopted transportation planning standards. As such, they extend beyond the applicable approval criteria and introduce additional analytical and design expectations that are not required to demonstrate compliance with the Benton County Development Code.

Land use decisions must be based on adopted standards, and conditions of approval must be tied to applicable code criteria rather than supplemental or discretionary analytical frameworks that have not been formally adopted.

### A. CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PLANS AND STANDARDS

The Staff Report and Public Works memorandum reference planning initiatives and policy concepts that were not formally adopted by Benton County at the time of application submittal and



therefore do not constitute applicable approval criteria, including the Transportation Safety Action Plan (TSAP) and the application of a hybrid Primary Local / Minor Collector roadway standard.

The applicant recognizes that planning efforts such as transportation safety initiatives may inform future policy development. However, land use decisions must be based on the adopted provisions of the Benton County Comprehensive Plan, Development Code, and other formally adopted planning documents in effect at the time of application submittal. Plans, policies, or frameworks that have not been formally adopted through the County's legislative process do not constitute regulatory standards and cannot serve as the basis for conditions of approval or additional analytical requirements applied to a specific development application.

The hybrid roadway section referenced in the Public Works memorandum appears to reflect a planning concept or draft design approach rather than an adopted roadway standard. Any prior references to similar roadway configurations appear to have been developed at the request of individual applicants for site-specific design purposes and do not establish an adopted or generally applicable standard.

Accordingly, to the extent the Staff Report relies on concepts or standards that were not adopted at the time of application submittal, those concepts do not establish applicable approval criteria. The application must be evaluated based on the provisions of the Benton County Development Code and Comprehensive Plan in effect at that time.

**B. NEXUS AND PROPORTIONALITY**

Conditions of approval must be reasonably related to the impacts of the proposed development and proportional to those impacts. Courts have consistently held that such conditions must demonstrate an essential nexus to a legitimate governmental interest and be roughly proportional in both nature and extent to the impacts of the proposed development (*Nollan v. California Coastal Commission*; *Dolan v. City of Tigard*).

The Public Works memorandum requires roadway improvements to NW Powers Avenue extending beyond the project frontage, including widening to a hybrid roadway standard and associated shoulder improvements, as described in the Staff Report and Public Works memorandum. These improvements would necessitate right-of-way acquisition from multiple properties not under the applicant's control.

As demonstrated in the March 31, 2026 memorandum prepared by Sandow Engineering, Phase I of the proposed development is estimated to generate approximately 194 average daily trips, resulting in total corridor volumes that remain well below the Benton County Transportation System Plan threshold for a Primary Local Road.

The record therefore does not demonstrate that Phase I of the proposed development generates impacts that necessitate roadway widening, shoulder improvements, or application of a hybrid



roadway standard. Rather, the identified deficiencies reflect existing corridor conditions independent of the proposed use.

The required improvements function as corridor-wide upgrades rather than mitigation of project-specific impacts. In addition, implementation of these improvements will trigger off-site right-of-way acquisition and environmental permitting requirements that are not attributable to Phase I, further underscoring the lack of proportionality.

The record does not demonstrate that any of the required roadway improvements are attributable to, or necessary to mitigate, impacts associated with Phase I.

Accordingly, the required conditions lack an essential nexus to the impacts of the proposed development and are not roughly proportional in nature or extent. Imposing such conditions would effectively require the applicant to remedy pre-existing deficiencies in the transportation system, which exceeds the scope of permissible land use regulation and is not supported by the applicable approval criteria.

C. RELIGIOUS LAND USE CONSIDERATIONS (RLUIPA AND ORS 215.441)

The proposed use is a church and therefore constitutes religious exercise protected under the federal Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA). Under RLUIPA, land use regulations that impose a substantial burden on religious exercise must be supported by a compelling governmental interest and implemented through the least restrictive means.

In addition, ORS 215.441 provides that when a place of worship is allowed, counties must allow the reasonable use of property for activities customarily associated with religious practice, including worship services, gatherings, and childcare. While counties may apply reasonable site and design regulations, such regulations must not impose undue burdens that limit the ability to site and operate a place of worship.

The roadway improvement requirements described in the Staff Report and Public Works memorandum impose obligations that extend beyond impacts attributable to the proposed development, including corridor-wide improvements, potential off-site right-of-way acquisition, and widening to a hybrid roadway standard reflecting a higher functional classification than a Primary Local Access Road. As such, these requirements must be evaluated to ensure they do not impose unnecessary or disproportionate burdens on religious exercise and do not effectively limit the reasonable use of the property for religious activities as contemplated under ORS 215.441.

## VI. SUPPLEMENTAL TECHNICAL ANALYSIS

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The applicant has coordinated with its engineering and legal team to further evaluate technical and legal matters identified in the Staff Report and Public Works memorandum as well as the public hearing



held Tuesday, March 17, 2026. The following supplemental information is provided to assist the Planning Commission in its evaluation of the application:

A. SEPTIC CAPACITY

The applicant has applied for and received Septic Site Approval from the Benton County Environmental Health Department. A copy of the Septic Site Evaluation Approval was submitted as Exhibit J of the application submittal.

The approval site demonstrates capacity for both primary and replacement drainfield areas to accommodate a daily septic flow of 5175 gallons per day. Phase 1 of the proposed development includes a 500-seat church/gymnasium. Pursuant to OAR 340-071-0220, Table 2 (Quantities of Sewage Flows), church facilities are calculated at 5 gallons per day per seat, resulting in an estimated demand of 2,500 gallons per day.

Based on the Septic Site Evaluation approval granted by Benton County Environmental Health Department and the calculated demand, the site provides substantial excess capacity to accommodate the proposed development.

The evaluation considered the location and capacity of both primary and replacement drainfield areas, which have been identified and will be protected from disturbance consistent with applicable requirements.

Accordingly, the proposed development can be accommodated within the available septic capacity, and no constraints have been identified that would preclude compliance with applicable standards or conditions of approval.

Final septic system design will be submitted to the Benton County Environmental Health Department and Oregon DEQ for review and approval at the time of building permit.

B. TRANSPORTATION / TRAFFIC IMPACTS

The applicant has coordinated with its traffic engineer to evaluate potential transportation impacts associated with the proposed development, including comments raised in the Staff Report and at the public hearing.

The results of this evaluation are documented in the memorandum prepared by Sandow Engineering, dated March 31, 2026, included in the record as Exhibit A.

C. WETLAND DELINEATION

The wetlands as shown on the submitted Civil Plan Set (i.e., Exhibit D) were delineated by Eric Henning of Zion Natural Resources. The delineation report has been submitted to the Oregon Division of State Lands for their review and concurrence, and any jurisdictional determinations or permitting requirements will be addressed through that process.



## VII. RESPONSE TO PUBLIC TESTIMONY AND RECORD EVIDENCE

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The proposal has been revised to eliminate Phase II and is limited to Phase I. The following responses address recurring themes raised in public testimony and are provided to assist the Planning Commission in evaluating the proposal under the applicable approval criteria and evidence in the record.

### A. RURAL CHARACTER AND COMPATIBILITY

Public testimony raised concerns that the proposed development would alter the rural character of the area and be incompatible with surrounding uses.

A place of worship is an allowed conditional use within the RR-2 zoning district, subject to approval of a Conditional Use Permit. Accordingly, the applicable standard is not whether change will occur, but whether the proposed use at the scale requested can be accommodated in a manner that is compatible with surrounding uses and does not result in significant adverse impacts.

The evaluation of “rural character” must be based on measurable land use impacts, including site design, intensity of use, traffic generation, and operational characteristics, rather than generalized perceptions of scale or use type.

The reduced scope substantially decreases overall intensity and addresses concerns related to scale, traffic, and activity levels.

Phase I has been designed to minimize visual and functional impacts, including:

- Locating improvements toward the interior of the site;
- Maintaining substantial areas of open space;
- Limiting development to a single building and associated site improvements; and
- Avoiding high-intensity daily operations.

While the proposed use represents a change from existing conditions, the applicable criteria do not require preservation of the site in its current state, but rather that the proposed use does not significantly interfere with the livability or use of surrounding properties.

The record does not demonstrate that Phase I would result in significant adverse impacts to surrounding properties or that the use cannot be made compatible through the conditional use process.

Accordingly, when evaluated under the applicable approval criteria, the proposed Phase I development is consistent with the intent of the RR-2 zone and satisfies the standard for compatibility with surrounding uses.



B. TRAFFIC AND ROADWAY CONDITIONS

Public testimony raised concerns regarding traffic volumes, roadway safety, and operational conditions along NW Powers Avenue and surrounding roads.

As detailed in Section IV (Roadway Improvement Requirements) and Section VII(d) (Road Improvements and Proportionality), these concerns primarily reflect existing roadway conditions rather than impacts attributable to Phase I of the proposed development.

As further detailed in the applicant's traffic analysis prepared by Sandow Engineering, Phase I of the proposed development is not anticipated to result in a significant increase in traffic volumes or materially alter roadway operations.

Accordingly, the record does not demonstrate that the proposed development would create transportation impacts that preclude approval of the application.

C. ROAD IMPROVEMENTS AND PROPORTIONALITY

Public testimony raised concerns regarding roadway conditions along NW Powers Avenue, including safety and roadway adequacy.

As discussed in Section IV (Roadway Improvement Requirements) and Section V(b) (Nexus and Proportionality), these concerns primarily reflect existing corridor deficiencies rather than impacts attributable to Phase I of the proposed development.

Conditions of approval must demonstrate a clear nexus to the impacts of the proposed use and be roughly proportional to those impacts. The record does not demonstrate that Phase I would generate impacts necessitating roadway widening, frontage improvements, or upgrades to a higher roadway classification.

D. ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS (WETLANDS, DRAINAGE, WILDLIFE)

Public testimony raised concerns regarding the presence of wetlands, seasonal drainage features, wildlife habitat, and the potential for stormwater runoff or downstream impacts.

The proposed development is subject to multiple layers of state and local environmental regulation and permitting, including:

- Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) 1200-C Construction Stormwater Permit;
- Benton County Erosion and Sediment Control (ESC) Permit;
- Benton County Stormwater Management (SWM) Permit; and
- Potential state and federal removal-fill permitting through the Oregon Department of State Lands (DSL) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, if jurisdictional wetlands or waters are present.



These regulatory frameworks require detailed evaluation of site-specific conditions at the time of construction and ensure that stormwater quantity and quality, drainage patterns, and potential impacts to regulated wetlands or waters are appropriately addressed through design, mitigation, and ongoing maintenance requirements.

The applicable approval criteria require that the proposed development can comply with these regulations. The record demonstrates that Phase I can meet these requirements.

Concerns regarding wildlife presence and habitat are acknowledged; however, the subject property is not designated under any adopted resource overlay or protection program that would preclude development of the site. The property may be developed consistent with underlying zoning, subject to compliance with applicable environmental and permitting standards.

In addition, Phase I development:

- Limits disturbance to a defined portion of the site;
- Retains substantial areas of open space; and
- Will be required to incorporate stormwater management measures designed to control runoff and protect downstream conditions.

While development of the site will result in some level of change from existing conditions, the applicable standard is whether the proposed use results in significant adverse environmental impacts that cannot be mitigated. The record does not demonstrate that such impacts would occur with implementation of required permits and conditions.

Accordingly, environmental concerns related to wetlands, drainage, and wildlife do not preclude approval of the Phase I development.

#### E. NOISE, LIGHTING, AND ACTIVITY LEVELS

Public testimony raised concerns regarding potential noise, lighting, and the frequency or intensity of on-site activities.

The proposed use is a place of worship, which is an allowed conditional use within the RR-2 zoning district. As such, typical operational characteristics associated with places of assembly including periodic gatherings, events, and associated lighting are anticipated within the framework of the zoning ordinance and are evaluated through the conditional use process.

Noise and activity associated with the proposed use are inherently intermittent and time-limited, occurring primarily during scheduled services or events rather than continuously throughout the day. This differs from other permitted uses that may generate ongoing daily activity or continuous operational noise.

With respect to lighting, all exterior lighting will be required to comply with applicable development standards at the time of building permit review. These standards are intended to minimize off-site impacts through measures such as directional lighting, shielding, and intensity limitations.



Compliance with these standards ensures that lighting impacts are controlled and do not result in significant adverse effects on adjacent properties.

Similarly, any mechanical equipment, building systems, or site features will be subject to applicable building and development regulations governing noise and operational impacts. These requirements are designed to ensure compatibility with surrounding uses.

While some level of noise and lighting is inherent to any developed use, the applicable approval criteria do not require the elimination of all impacts, but rather that the proposed use does not result in significant adverse effects on surrounding properties.

The record does not demonstrate that the Phase I development would generate noise, lighting, or activity levels exceeding what is typical for an allowed conditional use or that would rise to the level of significant adverse impact. Accordingly, these considerations do not preclude approval of the application.

#### F. SCALE OF DEVELOPMENT

Several comments characterized the proposal as a “campus” or “mega-church” and evaluated potential impacts based on the full conceptual buildout of the site.

Accordingly, the Planning Commission’s decision must be based solely on the scope, intensity, and impacts of the Phase I development.

Importantly, a place of worship is an allowed conditional use within the RR-2 zoning district, subject to approval of a Conditional Use Permit. The applicable review is therefore not whether the use itself is appropriate in the zone, but whether the specific proposal at the scale requested satisfies the relevant approval criteria.

Phase I consists of a single building and associated site improvements at a reduced scale relative to the previously contemplated buildout. The reduction in scope directly affects key impact areas raised in testimony, including traffic generation, parking demand, and overall site intensity.

When evaluated under the applicable criteria, Phase I does not function as a large institutional “campus,” but rather as a single place of assembly at a scale that can be accommodated within the surrounding area.

### VIII. CONCLUSION AND REQUEST FOR APPROVAL

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The applicant has revised the proposal to eliminate Phase II and limited it to Phase I. This modification substantially reduces the scale and intensity of the project and resolves issues related to parking demand and project phasing.

The record demonstrates that the Phase I development can be accommodated within existing infrastructure and complies with applicable Benton County Development Code criteria.



While public testimony reflects differing perspectives regarding the desirability of the proposed use, the applicable decision criteria focus on measurable land use impacts and compatibility standards. The evidence in the record demonstrates that these standards can be met.

Based on the foregoing, the applicant respectfully requests approval of LU-25-067 (Conditional Use Permit) consistent with Option 2, subject to the modifications to the conditions of approval outlined in Section III and reflected in Section IX below.

As modified, the conditions of approval are consistent with applicable approval criteria and legal standards, including nexus and proportionality requirements.

The parking variance request (LU-25-066) is no longer applicable and should be dismissed.

## IX. PROPOSED CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

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The following conditions of approval reflect the modifications outlined in Section III.

1. Conformance with Approved Plans: Development shall be substantially consistent with the approved Phase 1 site plan, and supporting materials, except as modified by these conditions of approval.
2. Deed Consolidation: Prior to issuance of any building permit, the applicant shall record a deed consolidating Parcel 1 and Parcel 2 identified in Deed 2023-640923 into a single legal parcel. Proof of recordation shall be provided to the Community Development Department.
3. Phased Development Authorization This approval authorizes development of Phase I Development consisting of construction of the 18,902-square-foot gymnasium, associated parking, storage structure, and site improvements.
4. Parking Requirements
  - a. Phase I Parking Minimum: Prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy for Phase I, the applicant shall construct a minimum of 189 parking spaces consistent with BCC 91.605.
5. Road Dedication: The applicant shall dedicate 5-foot right-of-way along the frontage of the subject property of Powers Avenue NW sufficient to meet the minimum 50-foot right-of-way standard.
6. Road Approach: The existing field approaches shall be removed at the time the new entrance is established. The new entrance location shall serve as the construction entrance to the site. Other construction entrances will not be permitted.
  - a. The existing residential approach shall be modified to accommodate two-way traffic.
  - b. Knock-down bollards, a chain gate, or a knock-box gate shall be placed in the throat of the connecting road between the existing residence and the main parking lot to prevent cut-through traffic for access and egress.



- c. The applicant shall apply, pay fees and obtain approval for Road Approach Permits for all new approaches and/or modifications to existing approaches to the property.
7. Water Service: Water service shall be provided in coordination with the City of Albany. Any on-site storage tank and pumping infrastructure shall be installed prior to occupancy.
8. Fire Protection: All fire suppression, hydrant spacing, fire flow, and emergency vehicle access requirements shall be approved by the Albany Fire Department prior to issuance of building permits.
9. DEQ WPCF Permit: Prior to issuance of building permits, the applicant shall obtain a Water Pollution Control Facility (WPCF) permit from the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), if required based on design flow.
10. Septic Area Protection: Approved primary and reserve drainfield areas shall be protected from grading, compaction, or disturbance during construction. No development shall occur within approved septic areas without authorization from Environmental Health.
11. DEQ 1200-C Permit: The proposed construction activity and common plan of development will result in land disturbance of one acre (1.00 ac) or more. The applicant shall apply, pay fees, and obtain approval for an Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) 1200-C Construction Stormwater Quality Permit.
12. Erosion and Sediment Control Permit: Upon issuance of the DEQ 1200-C Permit, the applicant shall then apply for a Benton County ESC Permit. These permits must be obtained prior to start of ground disturbing activities.
13. Stormwater Management Permit: The total impervious area for the project in the post construction condition will exceed one-quarter acre (0.25 ac). The applicant shall apply, pay fees, and obtain approval for a Benton County Stormwater Management (SWM) permit. The SWM permit shall be approved and a Long-Term Maintenance Agreement signed and recorded prior to building permit issuance and before work begins on the proposed drainage system.
  - a. Construction and post-construction stormwater discharge shall conform to the standards and tenets established by Oregon Drainage Law.
  - b. Construction stormwater discharge shall conform to all current Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and Benton County erosion and sediment control standards using Oregon Department of Transportation erosion and sediment control details and best management practices.
  - c. Post-construction stormwater quantity and quality standards shall conform to all current Oregon Department of Environmental Quality and Benton County stormwater requirements and the most recent edition of the Benton County's Stormwater Support Documents.



14. Taxes: The applicant shall provide for payment of all prior year outstanding property taxes, current year-to-date property taxes, and any applicable interest and penalties. Contact the County Assessor (541-766-6855) to determine the amount due. (The applicant does not need to bring proof of payment to the Community Development Department; payment is checked by other means.) [BCC 95.125(4)]

#### Conditions of Operating Approval

1. Western Access: Western access shall be restricted from church-related activity. A Knox-box gate shall be placed in the throat of the connecting road between the existing residence and the main parking lot to prevent cut-through traffic for ingress and egress.
2. Stormwater Management Longterm Contract: The applicant shall maintain onsite stormwater management in compliance with Public works form.
3. Daycare: The applicant shall comply with Oregon Department of Early Learning and Care (DELIC) for the operation of a daycare.
  - Advisory - The applicant shall verify with DELIC if they are identified as a certified childcare center.

## X. EXHIBITS

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- A. Exhibit A: Sandow Engineering Memorandum – Response to Comments (March 31, 2026)

DATE: March 31, 2026

TO: Benton County Planning Commission

FROM: Kelly Sandow P.E.  
Sandow Engineering

RE: LU-25-066 and LU-25-067 Northside Church-Response to Comments

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RENEWAL 06/30/26

Sandow Engineering would like to provide the following information and response to the transportation-related questions and comments provided within the Benton County Staff Report, public works comments, and public comments for the Northside Church application.

## 1.0 ROADWAY WIDTH AND EXISTING CONDITIONS

Powers Avenue is classified as a primary local road within the Benton County Transportation System Plan (TSP). Cross-section and operational standards are based on functional classification.

The applicable design parameters for this roadway classification are:

- Average Daily Trips (ADT): <700 vehicles per day
- Design Hour Volumes (DHV): <100 vehicles per hour
- Minimum Right-of-Way: 50 feet
- Minimum Surface Width: 20 feet
- Minimum Lane Width: 10 feet
- Shoulder Width: 2 foot gravel

### Average Daily Trips

As identified in the staff report, the most recent available traffic counts (2019) indicate volumes of approximately 246 vehicles per day (VPD) on the west end of Powers Ave and 436 VPD on the east end. No significant development has occurred in the vicinity since that time that would materially increase background traffic volumes. Therefore, these counts remain representative of existing conditions.

Trip generation for Phase 1 of the proposed church was estimated using the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual. Use of ITE data is appropriate for Phase 1, as the proposed 18,902-square-foot building falls within the range of observed data for churches included within the ITE data set.

The proposed development is estimated to generate:

- 128 weekday daily trips
- 588 Sunday daily trips
- Based on a 7-day average, the resulting site-generated ADT is approximately **194 VPD**.

Directional distribution is estimated at 25% to/from the west and 75% to/from the east, consistent with regional travel patterns and roadway network.

Based on these assumptions, the total projected ADT on Powers Avenue is:

- West of site: 295 VPD
- East of site: 585 VPD

With the construction of Phase 1, the traffic volumes remain below the 700 VPD threshold identified in the TSP for Primary Local Roads. The roadway will continue to operate within the intended volume range for its functional classification.

### **Design Hour Volumes**

The DHV for Powers Road after completion of the church is estimated at 30 vph for the west side and 60 vph for the east side. These volumes are well below the 100 vehicles per hour threshold identified in the TSP for this roadway classification and are consistent with low-volume rural roadway operations.

### **Right-of-Way**

The right-of-way width along Powers Avenue varies in width and is less than the 50-foot standard in sections, including the development frontage. Consistent with standard practice, the applicant will provide the necessary right-of-way dedication along the property frontage to achieve the 50-foot standard.

Any section of roadway outside of the frontage is outside the control of the applicant. Oregon land use laws do not allow conditions of approval that rely on actions or agreements from third parties that are outside of the applicant's control. Therefore, the applicant cannot be required to obtain off-site right-of-way to meet the current standards or to construct off-site roadway widening improvements.

### **Surface Width and Travel Lane Width**

The existing pavement width for Powers Avenue is generally 20 feet, with some sections less than 20 feet.

The County is requesting that pavement widening be required along the full length of Powers Avenue to two 10-foot travel lanes. However, the TSP standard applies to roadway design at

the time of construction or reconstruction and is not intended to require full corridor upgrades where the roadway is already functioning within its intended classification.

As demonstrated above, the projected ADT (295–585 VPD) and design hour volumes (30–60 vph) remain well within the thresholds for a Primary Local Road. The existing roadway is operating within its functional capacity, and the proposed development does not introduce volumes that would necessitate widening beyond the project frontage. Additionally, the roadway operates within the range of low-volume rural facilities where narrower cross sections are typical and function effectively. Consistent with guidance from the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), the existing width is sufficient to accommodate anticipated traffic without requiring widening.

Requiring full-length pavement widening would address existing conditions unrelated to the proposed development and would function as a system-wide improvement rather than project-related mitigation.

### **Shoulder Width**

The TSP identifies a 2-foot gravel shoulder as the standard for this roadway classification. Existing conditions along Powers Avenue include segments where the shoulder width is less than 2 feet due to constrained right-of-way and existing roadside features. The County has requested that the shoulder be widened along the full length of the roadway, beyond the 2-foot standard, to a “hybrid standard” of 4 feet to accommodate pedestrian travel. This requirement exceeds the adopted standard and is not supported by the operating conditions of the roadway.

The roadway currently operates at low traffic volumes (295–585 total ADT), which is consistent with rural shared-use conditions where pedestrians and bicyclists utilize the travel way. While the posted speed is 45 mph, the low traffic volumes limit the frequency of conflicts and are consistent with rural local roadway environments without continuous shoulder or sidewalk facilities.

Achieving a continuous 4-foot shoulder along the corridor would require widening beyond the existing right-of-way in multiple locations, including areas with drainage features, vegetation, and existing utilities. Implementation would therefore require the acquisition of off-site right-of-way and substantial reconstruction. Conditions of approval cannot require actions dependent on third-party property acquisition.

Given that the roadway is operating within the volume and functional thresholds of a Primary Local Road, and that the proposed development does not introduce a level of pedestrian or bicycle activity requiring dedicated facilities, a continuous widened shoulder is not warranted.

No capacity, operational, or safety deficiency has been identified that would warrant roadway improvements associated with this development.

## **2.0 TRAFFIC FLOW PATTERNS**

Traffic associated with the proposed church use will occur in predictable, short-duration periods and will disperse efficiently within the existing roadway network. The projected traffic volumes do not result in sustained congestion, unsafe queuing conditions, or degradation of roadway operations. The traffic flow characteristics are described in the following.

### **Trip Distribution and Routing**

Powers Avenue functions as a local access roadway with limited connectivity and does not serve as a regional through route. As such, site traffic will utilize the most direct paths to higher-order roadways. Therefore, traffic will primarily route to/from the east via Scenic Drive, where Scenic Drive connects to other major roadways within the City. It is estimated that approximately 75% of site traffic will travel to/from the east via Scenic Drive, with the remaining 25% traveling to/from the west via Oak Grove Drive.

### **Peak Traffic Characteristics**

Church uses generate traffic in short-duration peaks, typically occurring immediately before and after scheduled services.

These peak periods are:

- Infrequent (generally limited to one to two periods per week)
- Short in duration (typically 30–60 minutes)
- Offset from weekday commuter peak periods

Outside of these peak periods, traffic volumes remain low and consistent with typical rural residential conditions.

### **Traffic Flow and Queuing**

Public testimony suggests that peak traffic may result in queuing along Powers Avenue. Based on the projected volumes and roadway characteristics, extended queuing is not expected.

At low traffic volumes, vehicles departing the site will disperse quickly along the roadway network. While brief delays may occur during peak departure periods, these conditions are temporary and do not result in sustained congestion.

The low background volumes allow for adequate vehicle progression without significant interruption to traffic flow.

### **Turning Movements and Gap Availability**

Turning movements onto Scenic Drive and Oak Grove Drive occur under rural conditions with posted speeds up to 45 mph. While higher speeds increase gap requirements, traffic volumes on these facilities remain low. These low volumes result in sufficient gaps for vehicles entering and exiting onto these roadways. The addition of site-generated traffic will not materially affect gap availability or create unsafe turning conditions.

### **Comparison to Typical Rural Roadway Operations**

The projected traffic conditions are consistent with typical rural local roadway operations, where:

- Traffic volumes are low
- Peak activity is intermittent
- Shared use of the roadway is common

The proposed development does not introduce continuous or high-frequency traffic patterns associated with commercial or urban uses.

## **3.0 TRAFFIC SAFETY**

Public testimony and staff comments raise concerns regarding traffic safety along Powers Avenue NW and at its intersections with Scenic Drive and Oak Grove Drive, particularly due to the posted speed of 45 mph and the limited shoulder width.

Traffic safety is a function of multiple factors, including traffic volume, operating speed, roadway geometry, and user exposure. These factors were evaluated for the proposed development.

### **Traffic Volume and Exposure**

The proposed development is estimated to result in a total ADT of approximately 194 vehicles per day, with total corridor volumes ranging from approximately 295 to 585 vehicles per day.

These volumes are well within the range of low-volume rural roadways. At these traffic levels, the frequency of vehicle interactions is low, which limits the potential for vehicle-vehicle, vehicle-pedestrian, and vehicle-bicycle conflicts.

Low traffic volume is a primary factor contributing to safe operations on rural roadways without dedicated pedestrian or bicycle facilities.

### **Operating Speed**

Powers Avenue NW, Scenic Drive, and Oak Grove Drive operate under rural conditions with posted speeds up to 45 mph.

While higher speeds can increase the severity of potential conflicts, safety is also strongly influenced by traffic volume and conflict frequency. In low-volume environments, the likelihood of conflicts is reduced due to fewer vehicle interactions.

The combination of low traffic volumes and predictable traffic patterns results in operating conditions that are consistent with rural roadway environments where shared use is typical.

### **Pedestrian and Bicycle Considerations**

As per the TSP, primary local streets are purposefully intended to have shared roadway facilities where bikes and vehicles share the travel lane. This treatment is appropriate on low-volume streets where vehicles have adequate gaps in oncoming traffic to maneuver around a bicycle in the road.

Pedestrian and bicycle activity in the area is limited, and users commonly share the travel way under low-volume conditions. The proposed development does not introduce a level of pedestrian or bicycle activity that would necessitate the construction of continuous dedicated facilities.

While additional shoulder width may be desirable, it is not required for safe operation under the projected traffic conditions.

### **Crash Risk and Safety Performance**

There is no evidence of a documented crash pattern or safety deficiency along the roadway that would warrant reconstruction or capacity improvements.

The proposed development does not introduce traffic volumes or operational characteristics associated with increased crash risk, such as high traffic volumes, continuous turning conflicts, or substantial increases in pedestrian activity.

### **Consistency with Rural Roadway Design**

The existing roadway cross section and operating conditions are consistent with rural local roadways throughout Benton County, where:

- Traffic volumes are low
- Shoulders may be limited or discontinuous
- Pedestrians and bicyclists share the travel way

The proposed development does not alter these fundamental characteristics.

#### **4.0 PROPORTIONALITY AND NEXUS**

Staff has identified off-site roadway improvements, including roadway widening and shoulder expansion along Powers Avenue, as necessary to address transportation impacts associated with the proposed development. The applicant does not agree that these improvements are warranted.

Under Oregon land use law, conditions of approval must demonstrate an essential nexus to a legitimate issue caused by the development and be roughly proportional to the impacts of the proposed development.

##### **Nexus to Project Impacts**

As demonstrated in Sections 1.0 through 3.0, the proposed development:

- Operates within the traffic volume thresholds for a Primary Local Road
- Does not create a capacity or operational deficiency
- Does not introduce a safety condition requiring mitigation

The roadway is currently functioning within its intended classification, and the addition of project traffic does not alter that condition.

The improvements identified by staff, including full-length roadway widening and shoulder expansion, address existing roadway conditions rather than impacts directly attributable to the proposed development. As such, these improvements do not demonstrate a direct nexus to project-specific impacts.

##### **Rough Proportionality**

The scale of the requested improvements is not proportional to the impacts of the proposed development.

The project generates low traffic volumes with intermittent peak periods typical of church uses. These traffic characteristics do not warrant full corridor reconstruction, widening, or expansion of the roadway cross section.

Requiring improvements along the entire length of Powers Avenue would impose the burden of correcting existing system deficiencies on a single development, rather than addressing impacts created by the project itself. The extent of the requested improvements exceeds what is necessary to mitigate project-related impacts.

### **Feasibility and Control**

As discussed in Section 1.0, implementation of the requested improvements would require work beyond the existing right-of-way in multiple locations and may necessitate the acquisition of property from adjacent landowners.

The applicant does not control these properties and cannot guarantee acquisition. Conditions of approval cannot require actions dependent on third-party property rights.

Accordingly, requiring full roadway widening or continuous shoulder improvements outside of the project frontage is not feasible and is not supported by the impacts of the proposed development.

### **5.0 CONCLUSION**

The proposed Northside Church Phase 1 development will generate low traffic volumes (7-day ADT of 194 VPD), resulting in total corridor volumes that remain well within the Benton County Transportation System Plan thresholds for a Primary Local Road. The existing roadway is operating within its intended functional classification, and the addition of project traffic does not create a capacity, operational, or safety deficiency.

Public testimony and staff comments raise concerns regarding safety, including the posted speeds, limited shoulder width, and potential conflicts between vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists. These concerns are acknowledged; however, traffic safety is governed not only by speed, but also by traffic volume and user exposure. At the projected traffic levels (295–585 ADT), Powers Avenue will continue to operate as a low-volume rural roadway, where the frequency of vehicle interaction and therefore conflict potential is low. Under these conditions, shared use of the roadway is typical and consistent with similar facilities throughout Benton County, and with the TSP. The proposed development does not introduce a level of traffic, pedestrian activity, or operational change that would create a new or increased safety risk beyond existing conditions.

While certain segments of Powers Avenue do not meet full cross-section standards, these conditions reflect existing rural roadway characteristics rather than deficiencies attributable to the proposed development. At the projected traffic levels, the roadway functions consistent with low-volume rural facilities, where narrower cross sections are typical and operate effectively.

The off-site roadway improvements identified in the staff report, including full roadway widening and shoulder expansion, address existing system conditions rather than impacts caused by the proposed use. The scale of these improvements is not proportional to the level

of traffic generated by the project and would require off-site right-of-way acquisition from properties not under the applicant's control.

Accordingly, the requested improvements do not meet the required nexus, proportionality, or feasibility standards and should not be required as conditions of approval.

To: Benton County Planning Commission

From: James Wright, Planning Division

Date: 04/7/2026

Subject: Supplemental Staff Memorandum – Applicant Rebuttal

Files: LU-25-066 & LU-25-067

## **1. PURPOSE**

This memorandum responds to the applicant's rebuttal testimony dated March 31, 2026. It clarifies staff's application of the approval criteria, addresses specific items raised by the applicant, and confirms staff's findings based on the existing record. No new evidence has been introduced.

## **2. UPDATED APPLICATION SCOPE**

The applicant has revised the proposal to eliminate Phase II and is now requesting approval of Phase I only.

Staff have reviewed this modification. The original staff report evaluated the proposal in a manner that allows each phase to be considered independently. As a result, the analysis and findings remain applicable to the revised request.

Although the overall scale of development has been reduced; the nature of the use, site conditions, and relationship to surrounding infrastructure remain the same. Staff find that the original conclusions continue to apply.

## **3. RESPONSE TO APPLICANT REBUTTAL**

### **A. Transportation Impacts and Roadway Improvements**

The applicant claims that required roadway improvements are not attributable to Phase I, but instead address pre-existing deficiencies on NW Powers Avenue.

Staff acknowledges that the roadway does not currently meet County standards. However, the applicable criterion requires evaluation of whether the proposed use places an undue burden on transportation facilities.

Staff's analysis considers how the proposed use interacts with existing conditions. The proposal introduces:

- Concentrated traffic during scheduled events
- Increased interaction between vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists
- A pattern of use that differs from existing residential traffic

Even at Phase I, the proposal represents a change in both the intensity and type of traffic on the roadway.

As documented by Public Works, NW Powers Avenue has substandard lane widths, limited shoulder capacity, and constrained conditions for multimodal use. Staff finds that the proposed development would exacerbate these limitations.

The recommended improvements are therefore intended to address the impact of the proposed use on an already constrained facility, not to correct unrelated deficiencies.

## **B. Nexus and Proportionality**

The applicant contends that the required roadway improvements do not meet nexus and proportionality standards.

Staff finds the proposed use will generate increased traffic during peak periods, require safe and reliable site access, and introduce potential conflicts between vehicles and non-motorized users. The recommended conditions directly address these impacts by requiring improvements to the roadway segment serving the subject property.

While some improvements extend beyond the immediate frontage, they are limited to what is necessary to ensure safe ingress and egress and to accommodate site-generated traffic along Powers Ave NW. The scope of work is confined to the area affected by the development.

Staff further finds the conditions are proportional. The County is not requiring full upgrades to a minor collector or other system-wide improvements that would exceed the impacts of the use. Instead, the conditions reflect a targeted, hybrid approach that addresses the development's impacts without overreaching or requiring development of Powers Avenue NW to a higher road classification.

Staff finds the conditions demonstrate a clear nexus to the proposed use and are proportional in scope.

## **C. Applicability of Transportation Standards**

The applicant states that certain analyses and design approaches referenced by staff are not explicitly required by code.

Staff's review is grounded in the applicable approval criteria, which require evaluation of transportation capacity and safety. The code also authorizes conditions of approval to mitigate impacts and ensure compliance (BCC 53.220).

In applying these standards, staff relies on:

- The County Transportation System Plan
- Engineering input from Public Works
- Site-specific safety considerations

Where the record demonstrates that a roadway cannot safely accommodate the proposed use, the County has ability to require improvements necessary to address those impacts.

## **D. Traffic Analysis**

The applicant relies on trip generation estimates to demonstrate limited impact.

Staff acknowledges this analysis but notes that review is not limited to trip counts alone. Staff also considers:

- Timing and concentration of trips
- The nature of the use (assembly use versus residential)
- Existing roadway constraints

The key issue is how traffic associated with the proposal functions within an already substandard roadway environment. The record supports the conclusion that improvements are necessary to ensure safe operation.

#### **E. Religious Land Use**

The applicant references protections applicable to religious land uses. Staff acknowledges that places of worship may be permitted in the Rural Residential zone through the Conditional Use Permit (CUP) process.

The County's review of a CUP application applies neutral and generally applicable standards set forth in Benton County Code Chapter 63.205. These standards apply uniformly to all conditional uses within the zone, including but not limited to schools, daycare centers, fire stations, commercial kennels, and other non-profit community facilities.

The recommended conditions of approval are based solely on the physical impacts of the proposed development, such as traffic, noise, and site design considerations, and are not related to or based upon the religious nature of the use.

#### **F. Environmental Considerations**

The applicant raises concerns about potential environmental impacts from roadway improvements.

Any required improvements will be subject to applicable state and federal permitting requirements. The need for additional permits does not eliminate the requirement to mitigate development impacts on-site or off-site.

#### **G. Public Testimony**

Public testimony identified concerns related to traffic, safety, rural character, environmental impacts, and project scale.

These issues are addressed in the staff report under the applicable criteria.

#### **4. PARKING VARIANCE**

The applicant has withdrawn the parking variance (LU-25-066). The Planning Commission should not consider that request. The current application is limited to the Conditional Use Permit (LU-25-067).

#### **5. CONCLUSION**

Staff has reviewed the applicant's rebuttal and finds that it does not alter the analysis or conclusions in the staff report.

Phase I of the proposal satisfies the applicable approval criteria, subject to the recommended conditions, including roadway improvements.

Staff continues to recommend approval of LU-25-067, subject to the conditions of approval in the staff report.

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**MEETING MINUTES**  
**Benton County Planning Commission**  
**March 17, 2026 Work Session**  
**6:00-8:00 P.M.**

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**I. CALL TO ORDER | ROLL CALL**

Benton County Planning Commission Chair Fowler called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. The meeting was open to the public virtually via a published Zoom link. Chair Fowler confirmed a quorum of the Commission.

**Benton County Planning Commissioners**

Nick Fowler, Chair  
Greg Hamann, Vice Chair  
Ed Fulford  
Evelyn Lee  
Andrew Struthers  
John Wilson

**Benton County Staff**

Petra Schuetz, Planning Director  
James Wright, Associate Planner  
Gordon Kurtz, Public Works  
Meg Reehoorn, Recorder

**Absent**

Catherine Biscoe  
Sara Cash

**II. APPROVE MINUTES FROM January 20, 2026**

Commissioners reviewed the draft minutes from the January 20, 2026 meeting.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Struthers moved to approve the January 20, 2026 minutes

**SECOND:** Commissioner Wilson

**VOTE:** Motion passed unanimously

**ACTION:** Minutes approved without amendment

**III. LU-25-066 & LU-25-067-Conditional Use Permit and Variance: Northside Christian Church**

Chair Fowler opened the quasi-judicial public hearing and read the required procedures into the record, including testimony procedures, applicable criteria, ex parte inquiry, and appeal

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rights. No commissioner declared an ex parte contact, conflict of interest, or bias, and no challenges to commissioner impartially were raised.

## **STAFF PRESENTATION**

James Wright, Associate Planner, presented the applications for property located at 4500 Powers Avenue NW, Albany:

- LU-25-067: Conditional Use Permit to establish a church
- LU-25-066: Variance request to reduce off-street parking requirements

Staff summarized the application history, noticing, applicable code sections, site conditions, and agency comments. Staff explained that the proposal is phased, with Phase 1 including a gymnasium initially serving as the main sanctuary, parking, and daycare use, and Phase 2 including a larger sanctuary and additional site improvements. Staff also summarized public comment themes received before the hearing, including traffic, rural character, environmental, and noise concerns.

Staff concluded that:

- The conditional use permit could be approved with phased conditions
- The parking variance should be denied

## **PUBLIC WORKS / ENGINEERING PRESENTATION**

Gordon Kurtz, Associate Engineer, presented transportation and public works comments. Public Works identified deficiencies in Powers Avenue relative to current standards and described a proposed hybrid road improvement concept intended to improve safety for vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists. He also identified issues related to right-of-way dedication, stormwater, frontage improvements, driveway access, and the need to prevent overflow parking on adjacent roads.

## **PUBLIC TESTIMONY**

Public testimony was received both in support of and in opposition to the applications

Testimony in support emphasized:

- The church's history of community service and support for families
- Interest in expanded childcare and community-oriented programming
- The belief that the proposal would provide community benefit
- Support for roadway improvements on Powers Avenue
- The view that the church would be a positive addition to the area

Testimony in opposition emphasized:

- Traffic volume congestion, and pedestrian safety concerns on Powers Avenue, Scenic Drive, and Oak Grove
- Concern that the size and scale of the proposed church campus would not be compatible with the surrounding rural residential character

- Concerns regarding parking, hardscape, lighting, noise, construction impacts, and event intensity
- Concerns about drainage, wetlands, runoff, septic impacts, and wildlife movement
- Concern that the proposal would function as a large campus rather than a small rural church use

Several speakers stated that their opposition was directed to the size, intensity, and location of the proposal rather than to church use generally.

## COMMISSION QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION

Commissioners asked staff questions regarding:

- Phase structure and future compliance for Phase 2
- Parking calculations and shared parking standards
- Road widening feasibility and right-of-way acquisition
- Traffic impacts and traffic study assumptions
- Septic capacity and wastewater permitting
- Stormwater and wetland review
- Rural character impacts, including visual effects of hardscape and increased activity
- Applicable legal standards, including state law and religious land use protections

Commission discussion highlighted concern about:

- Whether the proposal would substantially alter the character of the surrounding rural residential area
- Whether required infrastructure improvements were feasible
- Whether the Phase 2 concept could comply with parking and site constraints as proposed

## APPLICANT REQUEST

Following testimony, Lara Roque, on behalf of Northside Christian Church, requested that the record remain open to allow additional time to review staff comments, transportation issues, and matters raised during testimony, and to continue working with County staff.

## ACTION

After discussion of procedural options, the Commission acted on the applicant's request.

- **Motion:** Commissioner Wilson moved to leave the written record open for 7 days, followed by 7 days for applicant response and 7 days for staff to finalize the report.
- **Second:** Second received
- **Discussion:** Commissioners clarified that this action would keep the written record open only and would not continue the oral public hearing. The matter would return at a future meeting for deliberations only
- **Vote:** Passed unanimously by voice vote
- **Action:** The Commission approved the 7-7-7 record process

## FOLLOW-UP / SCHEDULING

Commissioners discussed scheduling constraints, quorum availability, and the statutory decision timeline. The matter was scheduled to return at a future meeting for deliberations only after completion of the 7-7-7 process. During discussion, a request was also made for staff to include legal guidance regarding the applicable religious land use law in the follow-up materials.

**IV. PLANNING COMMISSIONER | STAFF UPDATES**

No formal updates were made.

**V. NEXT MEETING**

The next regular Planning Commission meeting is to May 5, 2026

**VI. ADJOURN**

Chair Fowler adjourned the meeting at 10:07 pm