

APARTMENTS: Project received \$300,000 in backing from City

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Council approved the expenditure of \$300,000 to help fund the development of this project by Housing Works.

“We all know affordable housing is a critical need for the city,” Kucera said. “The Council took concrete action beyond just lip service. I’m proud they made that gesture.”

According to the program from the celebration, “In 2016, the U.S. Census Bureau estimated that 44 percent of renter households in Sisters were rent burdened, spending 30 percent or more of their income on housing expenses.”

When the project is complete in March 2019, Village Meadows will be providing affordable housing to members of the Sisters workforce and seniors. Specific units will serve households in the Oregon Department of Human Services Child Welfare and Self-Sufficiency Programs. Applications for residency will be available through EPIC Property Management approximately three months prior to project completion.

Sisters Mayor Chuck Ryan told those gathered for the groundbreaking, “A Council goal for the last three years has been to have 10 percent of all housing in Sisters be affordable... We are in for the long term. We won’t stop here.”

The City, Housing Works and its retiring Executive

Director Tom Kemper, received kudos from officials who spoke.

“It’s pretty exciting to be able to break ground on this project,” said Deschutes County Commissioner Tony De Bone. “Tom Kemper, thank you for your brilliance behind putting this package together. There are lots of parts and pieces to a project like this and Tom, his staff, and board worked very hard.”

Oregon Housing and Community Services housing integrator, Kim Travis, added, “It’s great to hear about the City’s cooperation as well as the County. This project could be a model for this type of thing. Soon 48 families will have new, high-quality homes.”

Matt Harrington, senior vice president of PNC Real Estate, investors in the project, remarked, “Housing Works is a phenomenal partner. It is a huge challenge to put projects like this together. Housing Works has the ability to leverage funding to make it happen.”

Washington Federal’s vice president and relationship manager for Oregon business banking, Shelle Pack, said, “This is a high-quality project and will be a big benefit to the community, providing stability for families, with more workforce housing.”

Washington Federal is the lender on the project.

Michael Hinton, chair of the Housing Works Board of Commissioners, pointed to their mission of fostering dignity through housing, something he sees the Village Meadows project doing. He thanked the lenders for their trust in the project.



PHOTO BY SUE STAFFORD

The golden shovels hit the dirt in Sisters last week as a new affordable-housing project got underway.

“We thank the City of Sisters as well for trusting us with this project. The size of your monetary commitment is admirable,” Hinton said.

Attendee and local resident Diane Goble said she believes Village Meadows will provide “more housing opportunities for seniors and young families starting out because there is no place else in Sisters (outside of Tamarack Village) they can afford.”

To qualify to live in Village Meadows, an applicant will earn below 60 percent of the area median income.

“We all know there is far more need than just these 48 units, but this project is a huge undertaking to begin to improve the situation,” said Kucera.

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