

City snapshot

By Sue Stafford
Correspondent

• The Christmas season has arrived, and Sisters is all lit up to celebrate the holidays and welcome visitors. Lights on the community Christmas tree were turned on last Friday evening followed by the Christmas parade on Saturday afternoon. Lighted snowflakes bedeck the light poles in town and most businesses are illuminated in the spirit of the season. A number of giving trees around town contain tags with gift suggestions for children and elders in our community. The Habitat for Humanity Gingerbread Trail can be found in businesses throughout town.

• The City has received a site plan for 27 apartments south of Railway Avenue that are part of the original Village at Cold Springs master plan by Hayden Homes. At this time, it is not known who the builder of the apartments will be or the timeline for their completion. Although they agreed to including the apartments in their original master plan, Hayden has since informed the City they don't build apartments.

• Hayden Homes has submitted a land-use application to the City, proposing to remap the open space zone at the McKenzie Meadow property to an area that is largely treed. The master plan for Hayden's newest project calls for 116 single-family homes,

22 single-family attached units (townhouses), and 60 multi-family units. At the present time, the timeline for the 198-unit development is four to five years.

• The Sisters Cold Weather Shelter is currently seeking volunteers for meals and monitoring for the month of December. To bring meals, signups may be done online at signup.com/go/DBQFMMyH. To be a monitor from 5:30 to 10:30 p.m., sign up on the same site, if training and a background check have been completed. For those who are new, contact JoAnn Rundell, volunteer coordinator, at joann.rundell@gmail.com.

• The City Parks Advisory Board discussed the possibility of establishing permanent conservation easements and view corridors in Sisters at its last meeting. The topic will undergo further discussion.

• The foundational and utility work on the Barclay/Highway 20 roundabout is completed, with the installation of all the rock pillars and boulders. The statues of the elk and pronghorn are currently being cast at the foundry. It is hoped they will be installed in time for Christmas. The landscaping project will go out to bid in January, with installation of plant material in the spring.

• Public Works director Paul Bertagna reports all the pavement rehab within the city is completed. Speeding enforcement is taking place

with the installation of a speed feedback sign on Jefferson Avenue, a trouble spot that has received numerous speeding complaints from residents along the street.

• Coin machines at the Village Green Park showers have been swapped out and will now accept either tokens or quarters. Tokens may be secured from the Family Access Network office in the Sisters School District administration headquarters on East Cascade.

• The ODOT/Kittleson Engineering feasibility study on the proposed mini-roundabout at the intersection of Locust Street and Highway 20 is completed. Public Works Director Paul Bertagna reported to the City Council that the response to the proposal from the freight industry was not favorable.

• Design work on the riparian restoration project along Whychus Creek, between Creekside Park and the campground is continuing. On Tuesday, December 4 (a change of meeting day for December only), the City Parks Advisory Board will review a 50 percent design before it goes to the City Council on December 12.

• The bus shelter located on South Locust Street near East Washington Avenue is being removed since no bus stops there anymore. The City hopes that COIC will make improvements to its three current bus stops in Sisters.

Unemployment rate up slightly

Unemployment levels ticked up slightly in October across Central Oregon, and unemployment rates are largely unchanged over the past year. Recent revisions using payroll tax records revealed that hiring was slower than initially estimated for much of Central Oregon. Although the region continues to add jobs, the pace of hiring slowed compared to the first half of 2018.

The unemployment rate in Deschutes County was 4.0 percent in October, a slight increase from 3.8 percent in September. The rate is largely unchanged from this time last year when it was 4.2 percent.

Deschutes County lost 390 jobs in October, typical losses for this time of year. Seasonal losses were concentrated in accommodation and food

services, which shed 1,250 jobs from September.

Job growth continues at an elevated pace, however recent revisions revealed that the pace of growth was slower than initially estimated. The county added 3,720 jobs from this time last year (+4.5 percent). All major industry sectors added jobs over the past year with the largest gains in construction, healthcare, retail trade, and professional and business services. Public-sector employment was also up significantly over the past year due to strong gains in local government education.



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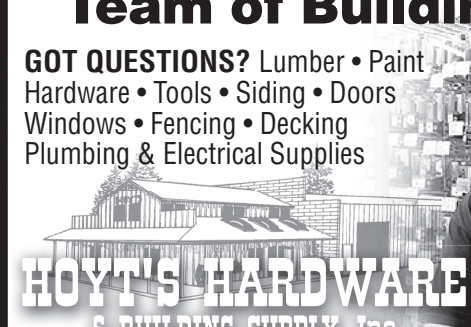
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