

# City snapshot – wildfire planning and holiday scheduling

By Sue Stafford  
Correspondent

• Due to the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays, there won't be Sisters City Council meetings on the fourth Wednesday of November and December. The only Council meeting left in 2019 will be Wednesday, December 11. There will be an Urban Renewal meeting at the conclusion of the regular Council meeting. The tentative URA agenda item is continued discussion around updating the Urban Renewal Plan first adopted in 2003, including the project list, duration of plan, and priorities.

• The Sisters Country Entrepreneurs and Executives Network (SCEEN) has begun meeting. This new informal networking opportunity is for entrepreneurs, remote workers, executives (working, retired, semi-retired), and all those who support entrepreneurship in Sisters Country. At the first meeting on October 22 at Fika Coffee, there were about 40 people in attendance. The next meeting will be January 21. Contact Caprielle Lewis, director of Sisters Country Economic Development, at caprielle@edcoinfo.com to learn more.

• The City Council, working with staff, is updating and adding clarity to regulations regarding public events and transient merchants, which have deficiencies in code language. While recognizing the intrinsic value of Sisters public events, the City is responsible for balancing the impact of public events on public facilities, streets, and parks. The ordinance having to do with transient merchants currently contains inconsistent terminology and little leverage for enforcing violations. Draft ordinances are available for review in the November 13 City Council packet (found on the City website under "Agendas and Minutes"). Council hopes to adopt changes in December or January to take effect starting in the 2020 event season.

• The City received a partial matching grant from Oregon Parks and Recreation Department to upgrade the Village Green Park play structure. Three alternative

designs that meet the budget will be presented by City staff to the Parks Advisory Board. They will pick two for the public to review. Community stakeholders, Sisters School District, and Sisters Park and Recreation District will provide input on a single preferred alternative. The final design will be presented to the City Council for consent to move forward with procurement and construction.

• The Community Wildfire Protection Plan is being drafted and is available for viewing and public comment at [www.projectwildfire.org/cwpps](http://www.projectwildfire.org/cwpps). Sisters is one of the first two cities in the state to have such a plan. It is not a regulatory document, rather it is a planned vision for preparation with community partners. Plans include identified critical evacuation routes, transportation plans, water availability and community education.

• Deschutes County and an ad hoc committee are reviewing wildfire risk maps and evaluating stricter building codes for wildfire-resistant construction. The 12-person committee is made up of two fire chiefs, insurance representatives, builders, realtors, citizens and retired wildland fire personnel. Part of their

job is to balance building requirements with affordability. The Wildfire Management Advisory Committee's progress can be tracked online at [www.deschutes.org/ed/page/wildfire-mitigation-advisory-committee](http://www.deschutes.org/ed/page/wildfire-mitigation-advisory-committee). The City Council will use this information to evaluate options to amend building and development regulations to increase resistance to wildfires within the city.

• The City has submitted their comments on the draft Intergovernmental Agreement for the US 20/Locust roundabout engineering to ODOT. Staff is awaiting a revised IGA from ODOT for Council review/approval.

• The City's water system has recently undergone several improvements with new lines in the Hood alley and along Locust Street. Design work has started on the Oak Street and Fir Street waterline improvements. The Well 4 Design and Construction Administration Request for Quote has been advertised with proposals due back to the City by November 20.

• Creekside Campground is closed for the season and will reopen April 1, 2020, on a first-come, first-served basis until reservations become active May 1, 2020.

Reservations for 2020 will open January 2, 2020.

• The new principal planner for the City, Nicole Mardell, will start her work on December 2. She brings a wealth of experience and passion for urban and community planning. She has most recently worked for Deschutes County in both short- and long-range planning. She was also involved in that capacity with the Sisters Country Vision project.

• The Planning Commission, at their November 21 workshop, will be reviewing objectives and policies for Comprehensive Plan Goal 1 (Citizen Input) and Goal 10 (Housing). They will also be reviewing several proposed Development Code amendments regarding special flood

hazard area overlay, communications facilities, and public works construction standards.

• Recently appointed to the Housing Policy Advisory Board are Jeff Seymour for three years, representing the Planning Commission, realtor Tim Kizziar for three years, and Mandee Seeley for one year, serving as an in-city representative. Real estate appraiser Dana Bratton was appointed to the City Parks Advisory Board for a three-year term.

• The City of Sisters was awarded a Building a Better Central Oregon Award by the Central Oregon Association of Realtors for making a significant impact with the completion of the Highway 20 roundabout.

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