

**GROWTH:** Pace of growth has been extremely rapid

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Needs Analysis (HNA), which analyzes the 20-year housing needs for Sisters for the period 2019-2039. Buckley noted that since 2000, Sisters has grown roughly 185 percent with an increase of nearly 1,800 people, a much-greater percentage growth than either Deschutes County or the state.

Rapid growth places pressure on limited housing stock.

The number of current households stands at 1,047, an increase of 660 since 2000. The study details the make-up of households, with 70 percent being family households. There are 30 percent more families and 32 percent more housing units since 2000.

As of 2018, the city had an estimated housing stock of about 1,484 units for the estimated 1,047 households. This implies a high vacancy rate of 29 percent. The study concludes the high vacancy rate is likely due to the prevalence of vacation homes and investment properties, which are not occupied year-round.

Since 2000, there has been a general trend of growth among those aged 55 and older, accounting for 33 percent of the total population. All age cohorts younger than 55 have shown a decrease except for the one percent increase among 25- to 34-year-olds.

## City offering grants for affordable housing

By Sue Stafford  
Correspondent

The City of Sisters is putting forth its first opportunity to access grant/loan funds to eligible agencies and private developers to aid in the construction of affordable housing for low- and moderate-income residents.

In addition to providing \$300,000 of City funds to aid in the construction of the Ponderosa Heights apartments on Brooks Camp Road, the City established its affordable housing program to help ease the shortage of affordable housing within the city. Funds for this program are derived from a portion of the transient room tax charged on all hotel/motel/short-term rental stays, and a beginning allocation from the City.

Applicants who apply for the money must be (a) a housing authority, (b) a qualified nonprofit organization that constructs affordable housing, or (c) a for-profit developer of affordable housing for low- and moderate-income households. They must also meet additional requirements including the project must be an eligible qualified project and the application must be made on the City's current program application.

The application forms will be available at Sisters City

Hall or at [www.ci.sisters.or.us](http://www.ci.sisters.or.us) by December 15. Each application must be filed with the City no later than March 1, 2020, and must contain: the date of the application and the applicant's name, address, contact information, and the signature of the applicant's authorized representative; a description of the proposed project including the type of housing and proposed project location, a timeline for project completion, and any additional information to demonstrate that the proposed project will satisfy the eligibility requirements; the amount of program funds requested and the purposes for which they will be used; the project pro forma including identification of funding sources to be used in connection with the proposed project; and certification that the applicant is current on all City accounts.

All property taxes for the property identified in the application must be paid at the time of application. There may be other information requested by the administrator to enable the City to review the application and determine eligibility for the program funds.

For more information on this program, check the City website (Affordable Housing Program) or contact Cory Misley, city manager, at [cmisley@ci.sisters.or.us](mailto:cmisley@ci.sisters.or.us).

## Housing programs available to residents

By Sue Stafford  
Correspondent

Several programs are available for lower-income homebuyers in Sisters. With the median home price here hovering around \$450,000, opportunities have been very limited for those in the lower income brackets to even consider purchasing a home.

First Story, the nonprofit organization associated with Hayden Homes, will be building homes next year in McKenzie Village Meadow that are meant for those with lower/modest incomes. The application will be made available by the end of November at [www.firststory.org/own-a-home](http://www.firststory.org/own-a-home).

The first step in applying for the First Story homes will be to attend NeighborImpact's Home Buyer Education class. Registration for the upcoming class in Bend or Prineville can be found at [www.neighborimpact.org/ni\\_events/](http://www.neighborimpact.org/ni_events/). More HBE classes will be available in 2020. The deadline to complete the HBE for First Story will be the end of January 2020.

There are several other affordable housing options available in the area. Sisters Habitat for Humanity is currently constructing homes in

Village Meadows South on the corner of Brooks Camp Road and McKinney Butte Road. They will also be building three duplexes (6 units) in ClearPine, off of North Pine Street, next spring. For more information see [www.sistershabitat.org](http://www.sistershabitat.org).

Located in Bend rather than Sisters, is Kor Community Land Trust (CLT), which is currently developing their first community of homes in partnership with Housing Works of Central Oregon. The overarching concept of a CLT is community ownership of land, and individual ownership of the homes. Kor uses funding from grants and donations to acquire land and build homes for those who otherwise couldn't afford the opportunity. Buyers must meet income requirements and qualify for a mortgage. Seventy-five percent of their homes will be offered to low-income and super-low-income qualifiers and will be affordable perpetually. For more information visit [www.korlandtrust.org](http://www.korlandtrust.org).

For more information on affordable housing, contact Victoria Vale, HomeSource specialist with NeighborImpact, 541-213-0844.

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