

Business / Agriculture

Grocery Outlet a go!

BY TODD ARRIOLA
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After more than a year's worth of communication and information sharing, on Monday, Baker County Economic Development Director Greg Smith announced that Grocery Outlet, Inc. has completed a real estate deal to secure a location for the construction of a new store in Baker City, a move, which he said will create economic growth, and showcase the business opportunities available east of the I-84 freeway.

Smith said in a press release, "This is a great project that will continue to help Baker City and Baker County grow. We have been excited about this development, and look forward to welcoming Grocery Outlet to the community."

The selected site for the store is east of the freeway and south of Campbell Street, a property sale that was facilitated by Greg Sackos-managed Intermountain Realty, Smith said. Rosenda Somoza, Account Executive for California-based ROX United, which handles public relations for Grocery Outlet, also based in California, released the following information, from the Grocery Outlet Real Estate Team:

"Grocery Outlet, Inc. is negotiating a site for a new store in Baker City; It will be located at the SEC (Southern End of Concurrency) of I-84 & Highway 7 (Campbell Street); It will be a newly constructed, 19,000 square foot, free standing building; We have received many calls and emails over the years from the residents of Baker City, for a new store in their community; The store is currently scheduled to open in early 2019; Hiring will be conducted only at the store when construction is almost finished, late in 2018; The currently closest store is in La Grande, and we are pleased to be able to join the fine community of Baker City."

The press release from Smith also included comments from Baker County Board of Commissioners Chair Bill Harvey, Baker County Economic Development Council Chair Craig Ward, and Baker City Manager Fred Warner, Jr.

Harvey said, "Grocery Outlet is a great fit for Baker County citizens. The store will be an asset to the community, and coincide well with our area grocery options."

Ward said, "I am pleased

to welcome Grocery Outlet to the community. Greg and his team have been diligent in securing this project, and supporting growth in Baker County."

Warner, Jr. said, "We are so pleased that Grocery Outlet has chosen Baker City for expansion. We believe that they will be a great community partner, and an asset to our community. I would like to thank all the people who worked hard to make this economic development effort successful."

During an interview, Smith emphasized the team effort involved, which he said also includes Baker County Planning Director Holly Kerns, and he elaborated on the effort and future development of the store, the ground breaking of which he anticipates will happen sometime next Spring. "It's kind of exciting—it will create about 20 to 25 jobs. The really exciting part is, it's going to help us by opening up the other side of the freeway, with a nationally known brand," he said.

Smith said that one of the roadblocks to locating a Grocery Outlet store in Baker City has been the regulations regarding size limits for signs placed within the Freeway Overlay District, where both the store and any associated signs would be located. Deepak Prashar, who owns the Super 8 Motel and leases the Motel 6, both on Campbell Street east of the freeway, showcased the issues with commercial sign size limits, and brought this subject to the attention of the County Economic Development Council (EDC), and City Council.

According to Grocery Outlet company information, "significant pylon and building signage" is required for a store location, however, Smith said, "Fred (Warner, Jr.) and his team were successful in helping with that," with continuing effort to modify the City sign ordinance, allowing for greater signage exposure along the freeway.

He said, "It's important to those businesses, to be able to get that signage, to get people to stop here, instead of going to Ontario or La Grande." Smith said that the EDC unanimously supported the idea of modifying the ordinance, and addressed a letter to City Council to state so.

With the signage issue set to be resolved, Smith said, it appeared that the only remaining primary concerns for Grocery Outlet were obtaining reasonable terms on real estate, and feeling that the community would support

the store, both of which Smith had no doubt are also resolved. He said, "I think this store's going to do very well in Baker. I think the whole County is going to be served from this store."

When speaking with representatives and the developer for Grocery Outlet, Smith said that he shared various details, among them, traffic and population information, and the effects of the Albertsons and Safeway merger situation, which left Baker City with Safeway as the sole major grocer and the Albertsons building vacant for a significant period of time, before its doors were reopened for business.

Smith said that having shopping choices has always been a concern in the community. He said, "Folks all along have supported Albertsons and Safeway. They're great, and we have two, rather than just one, but I think we all know that folks would like a third option—I think this will provide it."

As part of the process to bring Grocery Outlet into Baker City, Harvey had asked Smith to acquire details regarding the operation of the store in La Grande, and both were surprised to learn that the company's business model involves a single owner/operator for each location, as opposed to say, managing two locations, which they thought may be a possibility.

Both Harvey and Smith said that Grocery Outlet corporate said "No," regarding this possibility, however, they piqued the company's interest, and Harvey said, "...they sent people to look at multiple sites, and they finally decided on the site they selected."

Smith said that, as far as he knows, an owner/operator hasn't been chosen yet, for this location.

Smith said that the decision by Grocery Outlet to pass on Baker City at the time was disappointing, "But, what it did was, it got us on the map. All of a sudden, they realized, that yeah, there's a demand for Grocery Outlet in town, and seven months later, here they are. They're putting one in Burns (Oregon-based Dickerhoof Properties took on construction of that location)." He said that he anticipates the bid for store construction being open to local contractors and sub-contractors, which would provide more local job opportunities.

During an interview with Harvey, he said, "I think it's going to be a huge asset to Baker County,

because we want to encourage businesses to go onto the other side of the freeway, with all the open spaces we have over there. You literally have a 'clean slate,' to start with, to put in what you want to put in...This is a great catalyst, to get people started out in that direction..."

He agreed with Smith that the store would provide economic growth for the community, but Harvey sees it as a more focused benefit. "A Grocery Outlet will take care of the community that it's in. That gives a shopper another avenue for selection, and hopefully, price reduction, and meet their particular needs, as far as their budget" he said, as he explained that it will be a bigger draw for local shoppers, than for people elsewhere in the County, or people coming in off the freeway, though he said that the location will certainly pull in travelers from I-84.

Harvey, who worked for Safeway from 1972 to 1981, and whose parents also worked for the company, said, "I was in all aspects of the grocery business, so, I know the business well, and I knew Grocery Outlet would be a good fit."

He sees benefits regarding Grocery Outlet's expansion into Baker City, but, he said, "Some people may think something negative towards it, but, any time we've got job opportunities in Baker, you have to think that the people who work there are going to spend their money in Baker. So, other businesses do gain a benefit from that ... those people have money to go out to dinner, or go down town and buy something they don't sell at a Grocery Outlet store. So, you're benefiting the community as a whole, when you do that."

During an interview, Warner, Jr. said, "You know, Albertsons and Safeway—I mean, I'm glad we've got two grocery stores, but when they merged, I thought they were still going to be a bit separate, and they're not. And, to have another grocery store in would give people choices. We have a bunch of leakage, of people going to La Grande, to Wal-Mart, and to Grocery Outlet. Anything we can do to keep people buying local is good for our economy. The more stuff we have here, the less they'll go elsewhere—that's just money going out of the community. They've (Grocery Outlet) become quite a store—I like the one in La Grande."

— WEEKLY HAY REPORT —

Friday, October 20, 2017 — Eastern Oregon

Prices trended generally steady in a limited test. Sporadic rain showers and thunderstorms in hay growing areas has hindered haying process. Retail/Stable type hay remains the largest demanded hay. Demand for organic hay increased this week.

Tons	Price Range	Wtd Avg
Alfalfa / Orchard Mix Small Square Premium	27 175.00-185.00	182.41
Mixed Grass Small Square Utility	300 45.00-45.00	45.00

USDA Market News Service—AMS.USDA.gov

— CATTLE MARKET REPORT —

Wednesday, October 25, 2017

Vale, Oregon

Cattle sold through the auction: 1,690

Steer Calves

300-400#	Bulk 185.00-221.00	Top 225.00
400-500#	Bulk 165.00-195.00	Top 203.50
500-600#	Bulk 135.00-163.00	Top 167.00

Heifer Calves

300-400#	Bulk 140.00-169.00	Top 173.00
400-500#	Bulk 131.00-160.00	Top 164.00
500-600#	Bulk 125.00-143.00	Top 144.50

Yearling Steers

600-700#	Bulk 134.00-158.00	Top 161.00
700-800#	Bulk 125.00-150.00	Top 152.00
800-900#	Bulk 130.00-148.00	Top 150.00
900-1,000#	Bulk 110.00-118.00	Top 121.00

Yearling Heifers

600-700#	Bulk 130.00-145.00	Top 148.00
700-800#	Bulk 125.00-138.00	Top 141.00
800-900#	Bulk 115.00-134.00	Top 140.00
900-1,000#	Bulk 108.00-118.00	Top 126.00

Thin Shelly Cows	42.00-55.00
Butcher Cows	56.00-66.00
Butcher Bulls	65.00-76.00
Stock Cows	N/A
Younger Hfrts.	N/A
Stock Cows Young	N/A
ProducersLivestock.com	541-473-3136

— LOG PRICE REPORT —

Prices are based on the majority of saw mills in Northeastern Oregon and Central Idaho. The prices listed below are a composite prices of various sawmills willing to visit with me about this topic.

Ponderosa Pine—small diameter class 8-11 inches diameter class \$250 per mbf. Only one sawmill was willing to buy small diameter pine at this time.

Ponderosa Pine—medium diameter class 12-17 inches diameter class \$300 to \$350 per mbf

Ponderosa Pine-large diameter class 18 plus inches diameter class \$380 to \$410 per mbf

The Pine prices are still approximately \$40 per mbf below average lumber/log market due to 2017 fire salvage

Doug Fir & Western Larch—\$380 to \$420 per mbf. Normal prices typically ranged between \$425 to \$475 per mbf.

White Fir—\$300 per mbf. Normal prices typically ranged between \$340 to \$360 per mbf.

Engelmann Spruce—\$350 at one Idaho sawmill, other sawmills including with White fir prices.

In general, the log prices still impacted from 2015 fire season and fire salvage that resulted. Sawmills are starting to get log yard inventory in line with sawmill production needs. With a new Administration as of 1/20/2017, a more normal economic environment should result and hopefully a more healthy housing situation will result in a better climate for Northeast Oregon Sawmill and private forest landowners.

Courtesy of Arvid Andersen,
Andersen Forestry Consulting

— PRECIOUS METALS REPORT —

Price per ounce, USD

Gold: \$1,271.00

Silver: \$16.84

Platinum: \$920.91

Palladium: \$973.19

Bloomberg.com

— AG COMMODITIES —

Corn: \$351.50/bu/USD

Wheat: \$432.50/bu/USD

Soybeans: \$985.25/bu/USD

Oats: \$265.50 bu/USD

Rough Rice: \$11.11/cwt/USD

Canola: \$516.20 CAD/mwt

Live Cattle: \$120.78/lb./USD

Feeder Cattle: \$156.75/lb./USD

Lean Hogs: \$65.20/lb./USD

Bloomberg.com

DH Wagon & Carriage provide services to guests at the Geiser Grand Hotel

BY TODD ARRIOLA
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This month, Holly Boyer and Danny Clary, owners of Haines-based DH Wagon & Carriage, provided guests of the Geiser Grand Hotel with the first downtown horse-drawn carriage rides of their new venture, which they launched earlier this year. Boyer and Geiser Grand owner Barbara Sidway shared the same sentiment: "We're very excited about it."

Boyer, who grew up in the Baker Valley, met finance and business partner, Danny Clary, of Ohio, on social media through mutual friends, became good friends themselves over a period of years, and decided to "see what there was of it," Boyer said. She said, with a laugh, "I don't have any complaints about Facebook now."

SEE DH WAGON & CARRIAGE PAGE 7



Submitted Photo.

Owners Holly Boyer and Danny Clary.