

A rise in housing in south Clatsop County

Hotelier invests in Seaside housing for workers

By **Abbey McDonald**
Coast River Business Journal

With new developments and a recently assembled housing task force, Seaside hopes it can soon welcome local workers with the same fervor it welcomes tourists.

“It’s desperate really, particularly for workforce housing,” said Mayor Jay Barber. “One of the problems that our tourist-based businesses have is that they need lots of employees, but when they are able to recruit somebody, they can’t find a place to live.”

For example, if someone manages to find

a studio apartment it can cost over \$1,000 a month to rent. The security deposits alone, Barber said, are nearly impossible for new workers to afford.

Local leaders have identified an oversaturation of vacation rentals and a lack of buildable land as Seaside’s biggest challenges to address. They’re the same issues towns face across the North Coast.

The city is considering a moratorium on additional vacation rentals. Short-term rentals take up over half of the new developments of the past decade, according to a 2019 Clatsop County housing study.

The city has approved the construction of around 200 housing units in the next few years, on what little land is available. Barber said that he thinks the rent will only be afford-

able if developers can access federal and state subsidies.

“I don’t see how developers building a multiapartment unit, for instance, how someone can invest the resources right now with the costliness of construction materials of labor, and then rent a two-bedroom apartment at an affordable level. To me, that’s kind of the Catch-22 that we’re in,” Barber said.

New developments

Incoming construction includes the Cross Creek development on N. Roosevelt, which plans to add over 70 apartments.

Two other incoming apartment complexes, River Run and another development on Holladay and Avenue C, will add 90 units combined. Their developer, Masudur Khan, is a hotelier

who co-owns Seaside Lodging LLC.

The apartments are expected to be completed this fall. Khan has hired Ryan Keck as the director of construction.

Khan’s SaltLine Hotel opened in downtown Seaside in 2020. After facing his own challenges in securing housing for staff, and researching the local market, he chose new housing as his next endeavor.

“Ryan and I, we see that there’s some opportunity and there’s some need,” Khan said. “Based on the pandemic, of course, this world has changed. And figuring out exactly what we can do that actually we need for our county, our city, the needs for our people.”

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Construction for housing has begun on a lot in Seaside.

