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Public Hearing on C.J.'s traffic plan

By
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Cave Junction's City Council is hosting a workshop at 7 p.m. Nov. 24 in the council chambers to review the new Transportation System Plan (TSP) that will guide city council decisions regarding future development proposals, location and design of future streets, other transportation facilities and also establishes policies affecting transportation-related functioning for the next 20 years.

The workshop offers a less formal setting for people to obtain information before a public hearing on the TSP to be held at 7 p.m. December 8, also in council chambers at 222 West Lister Street.

"The existing Plan is being updated to ensure compliance with Oregon's Transportation Planning Rule," said Cave Junction City Recorder Ryan Nolan.

Approval of the TSP will modify some existing zoning and subdivision regulations and adoption of this ordinance may affect some permissible uses of both private and public properties in Cave Junction and may change the value of some properties. The primary change to existing parcels involves proposals for new access; existing accesses are not affected.

"Sometimes people worry that new transportation plans might affect or limit the use of their private properties," said Rogue Valley Council of Governments Transportation Planner Dick Converse. "But all that's added are provisions for agencies to maintain the streets without having to go through additional hearing processes. It's pretty minor." Converse, who is working on Cave Junction's TSP, will be at the workshop to answer questions and take feedback from the public.

"It's expected that the TSP will be implemented as funding is secured," Nolan said. "There are various sources identified in the plan; and once in place, it will become much easier to get the funding."

Copies of the draft plan, including maps depicting the proposed street system and transportation improvements, are currently available for review at City Hall and will be on display at the workshop. The TSP also includes sidewalk, pedestrian and handicap access improvements as well as bicycle parking.

"The main goals in the TSP are to improve safety and efficiency," Converse said.

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Little grapplers pullout big win



(Courtesy photo for The Illinois Valley News)

The I.V. Wrestling Club show-off the hardware after last week's big tournament. 1st – Patrick Murphy, Jozia Williams, Eligh Parker, Dillon Shirley, Ryan Griffin, Daniel Polk, Mica Martinho, Garret White; 2nd - David Alleman, Robert Wendover, Jackson Tincher, Rayden Mundt, James Conn and 3rd - Mason Tincher.

Commissioners ink airport deal

By
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Josephine County commissioners have approved a proposed long-term lease with Manor Communities Development Corporation (MCDC), LLC, which has agreed to invest over \$20 million in Illinois Valley Airport infrastructure over the next 30 years.

The agreement, signed by commissioners Nov. 12, provides for yearly cash payments to the Airports Department and direct investment in a full-length parallel taxiway, connectors, ramps, aprons, water system, septic system, electrical system and the hangars and buildings needed to support a new Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) Operations and Technology Center.

"It is an ambitious vision, but one worthy of the residents of the Illinois Valley and Josephine County," said Josephine County Airports Manager Larry Graves.

The next six months will see the beginning phases of environmental assessment, engineering design and site planning to meet county, state and federal regulatory requirements.

Actual ground-breaking is slated to take place by the summer of 2015.

Some community members have expressed concern that the founder and managing member of MCDC is Larry Osborn, whose proposed development around the Illinois Valley Golf Course failed as a result of the 2009 recession. Osborn was also the developer of Cedarbrook Estates, where homeowners were faced with mold and other remediation issues because the development was built below grade and is crisscrossed by underground streams. All the affected homeowners received settlements several years ago, according to Graves.

During the Cave Junction City Council's monthly Nov. 10 meeting, county critic Dale Matthews scolded the council. He complained that the city should have been better informed of the pending deal after Mayor Carl Jacobson told him that the development was not under the city's jurisdiction. The I.V. Airport Advisory Board (IVAAB) was first informed of the potential development in August and voted in support of the concept in September.

"I think it's a really good thing and a very positive development," said IVAAB member Jim

Diefenderfer in a telephone interview. "It's going to bring a number of jobs here and I don't think lack of a police force will be a deterrent. I've worked for Northrop-Grumman, Lockheed and Boeing and they always provide security for their own sites. This airport is a perfect location for UAV testing and development. We can even land a 30,000-pound airplane here, if necessary."

Fellow IVAAB member Kenny Houck is also optimistic.

"The important thing to remember is that this won't cost the county a dime," said Houck. "Even if only 10 percent of the plan comes to fruition, we'll be that much further ahead."

A quick review of MCDC's website, www.manorcommunities.com, reveals an ambitious agenda of community development around the world and an eight-member board of directors who list impressive resumes.

Commercial applications of Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS's) and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV's) are expected to become a huge growth industry in the United States, with \$11 billion spent in the past three years and over \$140 billion in related economic activity

expected to be generated by the year 2020. This is according to the Association of Unmanned Vehicle Systems International (AUUSI, www.auusi.org) and SoarOregon (www.soaroregon.com) a recently formed industry association focusing on UAV's.

"For over 70 years, the IV Airport has quietly served the needs of the community by hosting the Siskiyou Smokejumper Base and dozens of light aircraft used for business and pleasure, but in all that time, not one serious customer has offered the county a nickel to develop within the Airport's Industrial Park and surrounding land on the west side of the runway," Graves said.

"Now, because of a fortuitous coming together of location, facilities, surrounding wilderness area and new technology, IV Airport is suddenly one of the most desirable locations in the western USA for commercial operation of UAV's and UAS's," Graves said. "MCDC will act as the umbrella company to attract aeronautical technology companies on teaming agreements, and will build-to-suit all the facilities that these companies will need to conduct their operations at the IV Airport."

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Poll suggests new public safety levy might fly with voters

By
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A recent poll of Josephine County residents indicates a five-year public safety levy could pass if the proposal increases rural patrols, jail funding and juvenile justice services. A similar levy that failed by just a few percentage points last May lacked funding for patrols.

"The poll showed how people want Sheriff's patrols restored throughout the county, so that when someone calls 911, they'll get help. That's a top priority," said Scott Draper, a spokesman for Community United for Safety, the countywide grassroots group that commissioned the poll.

People were asked if they'd support a measure raising property taxes to \$1.40 per \$1000 of assessed value to fund sheriff's patrols 16 hours daily, seven days per week; increase jail capacity to 160 beds;

and reopen the Juvenile Justice Center to shelter abused youth and provide counseling to youth-in-crisis.

61 percent in Grants Pass and 51 percent countywide said "definitely yes" and another 12 percent said "probably yes," but with a caveat. Voters also want accountability, according to Dr. Gary Manross, CEO of the southern California based Strategy Research Institute (SRI), which conducted the poll.

Manross said a "formal oversight committee" comprised of people appointed from around the county that monitors how levy money is spent would be crucial - as the poll indicated a prevalent lack of trust in government.

Manross also stressed that levy campaigners need to spend enough money to thoroughly inform and educate voters. SRI also conducted and analyzed polling for Lane county last year to help frame a now-passed public safety levy to fund jail and ju-

venile services.

73 percent of Josephine County poll respondents named public safety as their "top" or "very important" priority issue of concern - nothing else was even close; and 78 percent said a safe community is needed in order to attract new businesses and create more good jobs throughout the county.

Of the 402 people polled, half live in the cities and half reside scattered around the county, and interestingly, the responses from rural residents were very similar to those from city dwellers.

Draper said signature gathering for the new measure will begin in December, with the goal of placing the new levy proposal on the May 2015 ballot. If passed, those with median-priced homes would pay \$222 per year. "And that's significantly less than what most of us would pay for an insurance deductible when we get something stolen," Draper said.

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