

HERMISTON

# Paint job on city's to-do list

By JADE MCDOWELL  
East Oregonian



Staff photo by Jade McDowell

Residents have complained that the paint job on the city's water tower looks bland and unfinished.

Replacing the heavily-criticized paint job on Hermiston's water tower is one of the Community Enhancement Committee's top priorities for making the city a more attractive place.

The water tower is one of seven projects on a priority list unveiled by the committee this week. The group now wants input from the public on the list.

"We've come up with a great list of ideas that we think are valuable to the community, but we also want to hear more from the community on what they think of the value of those ideas," Mayor David Drotzmann said.

Assistant city manager Mark Morgan told the city council on Monday that creating a priority list of projects that have already been vetted and researched will make it easier to budget and to pounce on funding opportunities when they come along.

"The city gets suggestions all the time ... A lot of times they're very good recommendations but they come maybe at an inopportune time or maybe out of the budget cycle," he said.

He said the list, which is in no particular order, will be

tackled as funding becomes available:

- 1) Redesign the junction of Southeast 2nd Street and Highway 395 in front of the Hermiston Conference Center to address safety concerns. Add a decorative arch and landscaping, water feature and art to create an aesthetically pleasing entryway to downtown.
- 2) Create more pedestrian pathways through the city.
- 3) Plant shrubs and other low-maintenance visual buf-

fers at the city's eight crossings of the Hinkle-to-Umatilla rail spur to limit the visual impact of the railroad.

- 4) Repaint the south water tower.
- 5) Add attractive directional signs pointing visitors to various sectors of the city.
- 6) Take over, downsize and clean up the Hodge Park train display and remove fencing around it. The caretakers have expressed interest in transferring the display, which, according to the

committee's report, "gives the appearance of abandoned industrial machinery, rather than an inviting historical display."

7) Upgrade and maintain plants in the median along South Highway 395.

The full report and a link for providing feedback on the list can be found at [www.hermiston.or.us](http://www.hermiston.or.us).

Contact Jade McDowell at [jmcdowell@eastoregonian.com](mailto:jmcdowell@eastoregonian.com) or 541-564-4536.

PENDLETON

# State prepares for BMRC demolition

By ANTONIO SIERRA  
East Oregonian

The Oregon House of Representatives is one of the last things standing in front of a bill that would transfer the Blue Mountain Recovery Center and Eastern Oregon Training Center properties to the city of Pendleton.

Widely expected to pass with little opposition, the bill was approved by a near unanimous vote in the Senate and has since been referred to the House Committee on

Rules. Regardless of the Legislature's activity, the state Department of Administrative Services is preparing for the impending demolition.

Department spokesman Matt Shelby said an architect was hired to create a scope-of-work project, which is "90 percent complete."

After the architect finishes his work, the department will go out to bid for the demolition and abatement services, a process Shelby estimates will last until mid-May.

Shelby said until the Legislature approves the bill, department officials won't be sure when they can start demolishing BMRC and eight buildings on the former EOTC campus.

In addition to asbestos and lead paint removal, Shelby said the department will search both sites for salvageable material before the buildings are demolished.

Afterwards, the sites will be filled in and turned over to the city for future industrial and housing projects.

"At the end of the day, our goal is to turn over land that is usable," he said.

The city wants to use the BMRC property to attract industrial business. While one building on the EOTC campus will remain with the Oregon Health Authority, the city hopes to turn the rest of the space into housing developments for Pendleton residents and Blue Mountain Community College students.

City Manager Robb Corbett said no developers have expressed interest yet.

# Transmission bill gets House hearing

Work session scheduled Thursday

By GEORGE PAVLEN  
East Oregonian

A bill that would require energy companies to study where and how they can build their transmission lines away from high-value farmland is getting a second look in the Oregon House.

After running into a roadblock in the Senate, the Northeast Oregon Water Association and Oregon Farm Bureau are now attempting to steer their proposal through the House Committee on Rural Communities, Land Use and Water.

House Bill 2508 has taken the place of Senate Bill 873, and comes at a time when Idaho Power is trying to finalize plans for a 305-mile transmission line stretching from Boardman to the Hemingway Substation near Boise. The company's preferred route would run above at least one local dairy, irrigated fields and the massive Greenwood Resources Boardman Tree Farm.

Farm managers testified in favor of HB2508 during a hearing Tuesday in Salem, while lobbyists for some of the state's largest utilities pushed back against the legislation. A work session for the bill is scheduled for Thursday, where it could be carried onto the House floor or left to die in committee for a second time.

"We're still alive, and that's the important thing now," said J.R. Cook, founder and director of NOWA.

Cook had initially hoped to pass the bill through the Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee, with support from both Sen. Bill Hansell, R-Athena, and Rep. Greg Barreto, R-Cove. Hansell, however, was told by the committee's chairman, Sen. Chris Edwards, D-Eugene, that he had no plans to move the legislation forward.

Instead, NOWA and the Farm Bureau worked out a series of amendments and inserted the bill into another stagnant proposal in the House — a practice known by lawmakers as "gut and stuff." It was taken up Tuesday by a skeleton crew of the Rural Communities, Land Use and Water Committee, with only Reps. Brian Clem, D-Salem, and Vic Gilliam, R-Silverton, available to hear testimony.

In addition to farms, HB2508 would define livestock feedlots and dairies as highly productive farmland, subject to the same protections.

Utilities say they oppose legislation that would make it more difficult to build big transmission lines. What's more, the legislature's emphasis on lowering carbon and integrating more renewable sources of energy is driving the necessity to build such lines as Boardman to Hemingway in order to swap dependable power between regions.

Portland General Electric, Idaho Power and Pacific Power opposed the bill at Tuesday's hearing.

Contact George Pavlen at [gpavlen@eastoregonian.com](mailto:gpavlen@eastoregonian.com) or 541-564-4547.

# Forest Plan poised for more public meetings

East Oregonian

The U.S. Forest Service is reaching out to community groups in Eastern Oregon for another round of public meetings on the much-maligned Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision.

Supervisors on the Umatilla, Wallowa-Whitman and Malheur national forests say collaboration is the best way to find common ground in the plan, which has been criticized for everything from closing off access to slashing timber jobs and heightening risk for large wildfires.

Last year, the USFS rolled out its proposed revised land management

plan and draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Blue Mountains National Forests. The massive documents provided a vision for how the forests would be managed for the next 10-15 years.

The agency received more than 1,100 comments from groups and individuals during the first public comment period that ran for 150 days beginning in March 2014.

Anyone interested in hosting the Forest Service at a local community meeting can contact Melissa Wilson, acting spokeswoman for the Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision, at 541-523-1231 or email [mwilson04@fs.fed.us](mailto:mwilson04@fs.fed.us).

BRIEFLY

## Memorial account set up for teacher

UMATILLA — A memorial account has been set up to help cover funeral expenses for Elisabet Flores, the Umatilla teacher who died in a car crash on April 11.

Flores, 39, was a first grade teacher at McNary Heights Elementary. She died at Good Shepherd Medical Center in Hermiston after her car went off Westland Road near Hermiston's rural fire station and hit a fence. Her husband and son who were in the car with her were not injured. The cause of the crash is still under investigation.

Donations to Flores's family can be made at any

Banner Bank in Washington or Oregon to the account titled "FBO Elisabet Flores in care of Zulema Murguia." All proceeds will go to funeral expenses and other costs relating to her death.

Memorial services for Flores will be at 1 p.m. Thursday at New Hope Church in Hermiston.

The Umatilla School District published a statement on its website thanking a list of people for their support after the loss of their coworker, including the InterMountain Education Service District crisis team for providing grief counselors and the staff from West Park Elementary and Desert View Elementary for providing support to the staff at McNary Heights.

## City recycling day on April 25

HERMISTON — The city is ready to take paint, appliances and other hard-to-recycle items from citizens during Hermiston's Clean Sweep event on April 25.

Volunteers provided by the city's Faith-Based Advisory Committee will be on hand from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Umatilla Electric Cooperative parking lot, 750 W. Elm Ave.

Parks and Recreation director Larry Fetter told the city council that they plan to make the event an annual one. He said next year they would like to align with Sanitary Disposal's spring cleanup week so people can get rid of their trash and recyclables at the

same time. Next year the group also plans to organize teams of volunteers to do neighborhood cleanups.

The April 25 event will accept aluminum, appliances, car batteries, computers, concrete, electronics, paint, paper, cardboard, glass, plastics, tin, tires, scrap metal, yard debris and clean wood. Items need to be sorted before they are brought in.

Anyone with questions about whether one of their items will be accepted can call 541-667-5018 before the day of the event.

**Columbia United Soccer Club**  
**AYSO Region #887**  
PO Box 472 • Hermiston, OR • 541-701-9128

**REGISTRATION WILL BE CLOSED ON JULY 6, 2015**

## 2015 Registration Dates!

Players must be at least 4 and no older than 13 by July 31, 2015

All Registrations (player and volunteer) MUST be done online starting this year. You can also pay online if you choose to. ALL registrations need to be brought to an onsite registration so you can also choose uniform sizes and get player photos for player cards in U10, U12 and U14.

ALL REGISTRATIONS WILL BE HELD AT BUTTE SOCCER FIELDS CONCESSIONS STAND.

There will be internet access available for those that do not have it.

<b>Saturday, May 9 - 12pm</b>	<b>Tuesday, May 19 - 5pm-7pm</b>
<b>Monday, May 11 - 5pm-7pm</b>	<b>Thursday, May 21 - 5pm-7pm</b>
<b>Wednesday, May 13 - 5pm-7pm</b>	<b>Saturday, May 23 - 9am-12pm</b>

Registration Fees:

FEE: \$65 1st child; \$60 each additional child  
FEE AFTER JUNE 1ST: \$75 1st child; \$70 each additional child  
Fee includes: Uniform (jersey, shorts, socks); Participation Medal at end of the season; AYSO accident insurance for duration of season

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED** Volunteer registrations are also being accepted for many positions, no experience necessary, free training is provided.

NEW THIS YEAR - SOCCER FEST!

April 18 for 4 year olds • April 25 for 5, 6 and 7 year olds  
Registration starts at 8am, kickoff will be at 9am

Visit us on the web: [www.hermistonayso.org](http://www.hermistonayso.org)

~ SIX PHILOSOPHIES OF AYSO ~  
everyone plays ~ balanced teams ~ open registration ~ positive coaching ~ good sportsmanship ~ player development

## SEE HOW FAR YOU'VE COME!

Emily Ann Smith

PILOT ROCK HIGH SCHOOL

Congratulations! We are so very proud of you.  
Love Mom & Dad

Tell your favorite graduate how proud you are in our Graduation 2015 special section in the East Oregonian and Hermiston Herald & share their "Then" & "Now" Photos!

\$25.00

Private Party Only

Publishes: May 30<sup>th</sup>  
Send in your text and photos to [psmootz@eastoregonian.com](mailto:psmootz@eastoregonian.com) or bring to Paula at the East Oregonian office by May 18<sup>th</sup>.  
Mailing address: Attn: Paula Smootz  
211 SE Byers Ave., Pendleton, OR 97801

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Graduate's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Graduate's School: \_\_\_\_\_

Message to Graduate: \_\_\_\_\_