

ECHO

Road cleared for Northgate project

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian



Staff photo by Jade McDowell

Property on either side of Thielsen Street, the main road leading from Stanfield to Echo, would be included in the Northgate Project.

The city of Echo is still getting its ducks in a row to potentially welcome a major development on the north side of the city.

The proposed 132-acre development could include as many as 48 homes, a hotel, RV park, commercial and industrial projects and green space.

Developer Kent Madison briefly shared a master plan for the Northgate project at a Thursday city council meeting, but said he doesn't want to pull the trigger on it unless zoning, system development charges, annexation into the city and other issues are worked out and the project pencils out financially.

The property — currently dryland wheat — sits along Thielsen Street between the Interstate 84 interchange and the Echo Heights subdivision. Madison is proposing the project be annexed into the city and zoning to be adjusted to allow for commercial and residential development on the west side and light industrial to the east.

The zoning would be subject to approval by Oregon's Land Conservation and Development Commission.

"What I don't want to do is have this master plan, purchase the property and then have LCDC say 'No, you can't have that,'" Madison said.

City administrator Diane Berry said they may have to do some trade-outs, or agree to higher-density residential development, but city staff could assist Madison in putting together the application.

Madison does not own the property yet, but said he has an agreement with the owner to buy it if the Northgate project is deemed feasible. He has already invested

significant money into engineering reports and other due diligence and has been meeting with the Oregon Department of Transportation on what changes would be needed to Thielsen Street, which leads into Echo from Stanfield.

During Thursday's meeting Ed Hibbard of Anderson Perry engineering firm presented a system development charge study that sets the groundwork for the city to be able to charge system development fees on new developments. System development charges on new developments can be used to pay for new infrastructure such as water lines or to reimburse cities for infrastructure that was already built with extra capacity in anticipation of future growth.

Based on complex calculations about Echo's current infrastructure and future needs, Hibbard said Echo could justifiably charge \$13,060 per "equivalent residential unit," or the amount of water and sewer capacity

that one house would typically use. The number of equivalent residential units that the Northgate project comes out to would depend on what type of commercial and industrial projects the development attracts.

Berry said Echo was probably one of the last cities in Oregon to implement system development charges because "nothing" has been happening in Echo development-wise so it wasn't really needed.

"Basically, your potential development spurred the change," she told Madison.

The city council will vote at a future meeting on whether the city will charge the amount listed in the Anderson Perry report or, like most cities, reduce that number so it doesn't present as much of a barrier to development.

After the meeting Madison said that Echo was "moving in the right direction" as far as laying the groundwork for new development and even if in the end the Madisons decide not

to go forward with the project they will feel like they helped the city prepare for other future development.

"It's moving slower than we'd like, but that's OK," he said.

He said they hoped to move on the project within six to eight months.

Madison said they were working closely with the city and keeping residents in the loop because they don't want to do something that everyone will be opposed to. The Northgate project will be a "great asset" to add to the city's tax rolls, he said, but he is also aware that it will be a big change to the town of just over 700 people.

"It looks encouraging to us," he said of the city's support. "It's an interesting development because it's a completely blank slate. It's a great opportunity for the city to say, 'What do we want Echo's main entrance into town to be?'"

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Cornfield runner caught by state police retrieving vehicle

East Oregonian

A Boardman man was arrested two days after police said he crashed a stolen vehicle and ran into a cornfield, eluding police officers, police dogs and a drone.

Marco Antonio Garcia, 32, was arrested by Oregon State Police, after showing up at the Umatilla County Sheriff's Office.

Umatilla County Sheriff's Sgt. Josh Roberts said Garcia came into the sheriff's office on Thursday to get his vehicle, which had been impounded. At that time, he said, one of the detectives recognized his name and called Oregon State Trooper Trish Draze, who had initially pursued Garcia for driving recklessly on Tuesday. Draze came to the sheriff's office, interviewed Garcia, and arrested him without incident.

Garcia is charged with misdemeanor counts of reckless driving, hit-and-run, and criminal trespass, and felony counts of attempt to elude and unauthorized use of a vehicle.

Garcia has had several convictions in the area in the last four years, including possession of methamphetamine, carrying a concealed weapon, felon in possession of a weapon, unauthorized use of a vehicle, second-degree theft, and conspiracy to commit a class C felony.



Garcia

On Tuesday, around 9:30 a.m., Draze spotted Garcia speeding around milepost 188 on Interstate 84, going west. She followed him, and he turned onto I-82. He crashed the silver Toyota Tacoma he was driving into a guardrail on the overpass at Lamb Road, and ran into a nearby cornfield.

Officers from OSP, UCSO, several local police departments, the FBI, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service surrounded the field, and a police dog searched the field for Garcia. Officers also used a drone, but called the search off after about five hours after failing to locate Garcia.

Garcia had stolen the vehicle from Pendleton that morning.

HERMISTON

Fundraiser set for man who died suddenly

East Oregonian

Friends of an Irrigon man who died suddenly last month are raising money to help out his family.

Jimmie Bevan, 43, passed away on July 30 after suddenly collapsing.

Family and friends will gather for a celebration of life and fundraiser on Saturday at Neighbor Dudes Tap House, 405 N. First St., Hermiston. The event will start at 6 p.m., and there will be food for sale at \$10 a plate, including beef brisket and walleye tacos.

Bevan was a correctional sergeant at Two Rivers Correctional Institution, and would have turned 44 on Thursday, said his friend and colleague Ryan McMasters.

"It was completely unexpected," McMasters said. "He was at the mini-mart getting breakfast, and getting ready to go fishing, and he just dropped over."

McMasters said another friend performed CPR on Bevan for 45 minutes, but was unable to revive him. He said there was no autopsy performed and he

didn't know the official cause of death.

Bevan is survived by his wife, Jeanette; teenage daughter Taneesha and twin 4-year-old sons Jimmie and Jeffrey;

McMasters, owner of the fishing business Columbia River Hookers, is hosting the event with his company. He said all the proceeds from food sold at the event will go to Bevan's family, as well as all the money from a silent auction that will be held there.



Bevan

PENDLETON

Hotel developer asks for 50-year lease, \$57,000 in incentives from council

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

After holding a workshop to discuss it, the Pendleton City Council is set to approve a 50-year lease with Makad Corp. for a 74-room hotel at the Eastern Oregon Regional Airport at a meeting Tuesday.

In lieu of a standard land lease contract, Makad, a Vancouver, Washington-based company that is also planning a data center on the Airport Road extension, will pay Pendleton up to 2 percent of the hotel's gross revenue.

The lease will also include an incentive package that includes in-kind civil and environmental engineering work, water and sewer connection fee waivers, and up to 50 percent permit fee reduction. Not including the waiver and discount, City Manager Robb Corbett is estimating the incentive package will cost \$57,500 to the city.

Since the hotel will be built on top of the airport's current parking lot, Makad has also agreed to pay for a new lot adjacent to the hotel.

City officials have trumpeted Makad's previous experience in developing the River Lodge and Grill, a Boardman hotel built more than a decade ago that's still operating today.

But Makad has also been involved in a few failed projects at the Port of Morrow, including manure and ethanol plants that were never built and a power plant that was the subject of a lawsuit when a partnering company accused Makad Corp. of failing to pay back its loans.

Pendleton agreed to lease land on Airport Road to Makad in 2015 with a similar incentive package and a \$300,000 sewer line extension.

The start date of the lease has been pushed back multiple times since then and construction has yet to start on the data center, but Allan Fulsher, general counsel for Makad wrote that the company is still working on "one of the largest developments in Pendleton history."

According to Fulsher, Makad is challenged by a lack of infrastructure in Pendleton, particularly a dependable source of elec-

tricity, and is looking for a "creative solution." Additionally, Fulsher wrote the company is spending time identifying end users for the data center and debt and equity financing.

"The amount of time from original announcement until the present is not unusual for private developments of this scope, especially where significant barriers are present," he said.

When asked whether Pendletonians could be confident that the hotel project would get off the ground given the lack of construction on the data center, Fulsher said the two projects were unrelated.

"The only connection between the two projects is that we anticipate that future travelers to Pendleton related to the construction and operation of the data center will find the hotel to be a convenient place to stay," he wrote. "Neither of the two projects is dependent upon the other in any way."

As Makad moves toward getting city approval for the project, Fulsher wrote that there are a number of rea-

sons the company wants to build a new hotel in Pendleton.

"Horse Valley LLC (a Makad, Corp. subsidiary) is most attracted by the anticipated business growth at the airport and the industrial park," he wrote. "This includes the burgeoning unmanned aviation industry center at the airport. The hospitality project is intended to cater to business and recreational travelers that will find the airport location to be convenient."

The council will meet at 7 p.m. at the council chambers in city hall, 500 S.W. Dorion Ave.

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