

# Farmers Market opens Wednesday

By Lisa Britton  
For the Baker City Herald

The Baker City Farmers Market opens Wednesday with a few changes due to the coronavirus pandemic.

"I've been focusing on a sense of community. That's important right now," said Shaletta Baldwin, market manager.

The market runs from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. at Court Plaza on Main Street. Customers are asked to enter on the Main Street side, and exit at Resort Street.

So far, 10 vendors are signed up. Baldwin said there is space for 14, and encourages anyone interested in being a vendor to email bakercityfarmersmarket@gmail.com or call 909-781-4043.



S. John Collins / Baker City Herald file photo-2019  
Donna Goodwin buys berries from Hermiston-area berry salesman Aaron Anello during the 2019 Farmers Market.

how those apply to markets. "They've done a really good job of connecting with markets and market managers," said Upekala Wijayaratne, board member for the Farmers Market. To ensure physical distance for everyone, vendors will be placed 10 feet apart. Prices will be rounded to the nearest dollar to avoid use of coins.

Hand sanitizer will be available to customers, and high-touch surfaces will be sanitized on a regular basis. Customers are asked to wear a mask and to come with a list of items to buy. Vendors will pre-package items to eliminate handling of produce.

Live music, programs for children, and communal seating are canceled until further notice.

Hot food and drinks will be sold as to-go and not consumed on site. There will be no food samples.

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## HOMES

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More than 50 homes have been built in that area during that period, including developments along F and G streets between Cedar and Birch streets.

Michel said he would like to start building homes in his subdivision later this year.

The Baker City Planning Commission will have a public hearing on the Michels' application on June 17. The hearing is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. at the Baker County Courthouse, 1995 Third St.

Participants are encouraged to attend via teleconference. To do so, call 1-877-820-7831 and use the access code 8204693. People who plan to attend in person should call the Baker City-County Planning Department at 541-523-8219 prior to June 17.

Michel said Haden Dam-schen, a Baker City contractor, has built one home on a parcel beside the proposed subdivision, and is building a second home.

Those homes are both just east of Birch Street near E Street, bordering the proposed subdivision at its northwest corner.

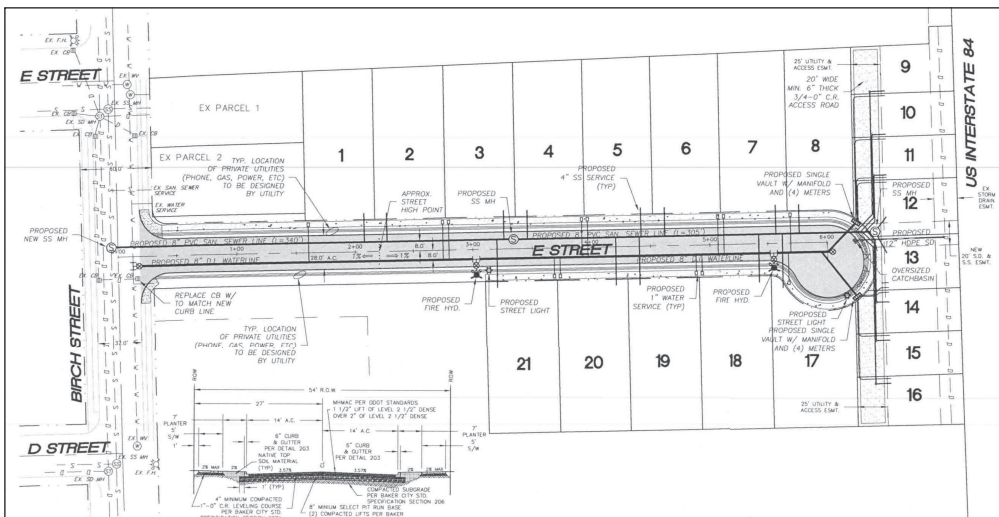
The proposal calls for extending E Street to a cul de sac near the freeway.

The proposed development calls for 13 lots of about 7,500 square feet each — eight on the north side of E Street and five on the south



Baker City Herald file photo

The proposed 21-lot residential subdivision would be built west of the freeway.



side. Michel said he would like to build two-story townhouses on the remaining eight

lots, which would be on the east side of the subdivision and arranged north-south paralleling the freeway.

Michel said he's not sure whether he will plan to sell bare lots, or have homes built first.

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# School officials want a say in plans for the fall

By Chris Collins  
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Administrators from more than two dozen school districts in the eastern reaches of Oregon want to be heard as state school leaders make plans to reopen classrooms next fall.

The Baker School District was among the group that sent letters to Lindsey Capps, the governor's chief education officer, and Colt Gill, deputy superintendent of the Oregon Department of Education, asking that the eastside schools be included in the conversation about how the reopening plan would be rolled out.

Baker 5J Superintendent Mark Witty said in an interview Thursday that he and Mark Redmond, Malheur County Education Superintendent at Vale, led the group effort to let the state education leaders know they expect to have a say in the strategy.

Sen. Lynn Findley, R-Vale, and Rep. Mark Owens, R-Crane, also sent letters on behalf of the schools. Lindley represents Senate District 30, which includes Baker, Grant, Harney, Jefferson, Malheur, Wasco, Wheeler and parts of Clackamas, Deschutes, Lake and Marion counties. Owens is the representative of House District 60, which includes the counties of Baker, Grant, Harney, Malheur, and part of Lake County.

In their letter to Gov. Kate Brown, the two legislators echoed the call for the school districts, ESD's and charter schools they represent to be included in the state-level conversations. Directors noted in a letter approved by the Baker School Board at its May 21 meeting that "As recently as May 7th, 2020, the Oregon Department of Education stated that school districts would be allowed to open concurrently as their respective county opens (documented as part of the Governor's reopening plan, under Phase II).

"On May 12th, 2020, state superintendents were informed by the Oregon Department of Education that all school districts within the state would follow a statewide opening in 2020-2021, rather than a county/regional opening," the letter continues.

The Baker letter, signed by Witty and directors Chris Hawkins, Katie Lamb, Kevin Cassidy, Andrew Bryan and Julie Huntington, stated that it was written to "express our concern regarding the significant change in policy which occurred within those five days."

Witty said until the last few weeks communication between the state and the eastside school districts has been nearly nonexistent. And they were not included in surveys designed to gather input about reopening plans until the last minute on their own initiative.

## Windstorm keeps OTEC crews working all night

By Lisa Britton  
For the Baker City Herald

Crews from Oregon Trail Electric Cooperative worked overnight to restore power after a windstorm hit Eastern Oregon Saturday afternoon.

"Trees and lines were falling all over the place," said Joseph Hathaway, OTEC communications coordinator.

Union County was especially hard hit with

4,000 customers losing power. In Baker County, 730 lost power.

Winds gusted to 56 mph at the Union County Airport near La Grande.

Hathaway said the on-call crews as well as additional linemen worked through the night to restore power by Sunday morning.

"That's a testament to the hard work of our line crews," he said.

## TESTING

Continued from Page 1A

Lynn emphasized that Saint Alphonsus is not asking people to come to the hospital solely for testing.

The program is designed to test patients who have come to the hospital for treatment, she said.

Lynn said she hopes there will be enough patients to meet the goal of 15 tests per week, but she conceded it's possible that won't happen.

She expects many people would welcome the chance to be tested, for free, for the virus.

Tests would be voluntary — hospital officials will ask patients if they are willing to

undergo a test, Lynn said. The hospital's goal is to start testing the second week in June, she said. The program will continue for a year.

Lynn said the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) is providing the tests and will analyze the samples collected. The program will not affect the hospital's ability to test people who have COVID-19 symptoms or who might have been exposed to the virus, she said.

"It's a great way for us to

increase our numbers and not deplete the volume of tests available," Lynn said.

As of Monday, Baker County has had one confirmed case of COVID-19. It was announced on May 6 and the person infected, who was not identified, recovered at home, according to the Baker County Health Department.

A total of 237 county residents have been tested for the virus, according to the OHA. That's about 1.3% of the county's population.

## BOOKS

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Sidway said the woman always browses Betty's Books during her stays in Baker City. The books arrived last week.

The Clarks picked up their books on Friday afternoon.

The eldest, 16-year-old Lane, wasn't at the Geiser Grand Friday but he also received books.

Mandy, who lives in Keating Valley, said her kids have "been getting bored all the time and tired of reading the same books."

The children are accustomed to deliveries from the Baker County Bookmobile,

which hasn't been operating this spring due to the pandemic.

Clark said she was surprised, and gratified, by the donor's generosity.

"It is so cool," she said. Clark said she has met the woman during some of her previous visits.

Sidway said she has talked with the woman since the books arrived, and the benefactor wants to order more books for Geiser Grand employees' children and grandchildren.

"It makes my heart swell and puts a smile on my face in a time when little else can," Sidway wrote in an email to the Herald.

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The Baker County Veteran Service will be closed on June 1-5 and open for business on Monday, June 8th

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