

# Details emerging on broadband network plans

By Richard Hanners  
Blue Mountain Eagle

More details about how a broadband network will be established in Grant County are becoming known after the Grant County Digital Network Coalition's board of directors have held three meetings since the organization was formed.

The city of John Day received a \$1.8 million appropriation from the state in 2017 to begin improving broadband internet access in Grant County and applied this year for a \$2.9 million federal Community Connect grant that required a 15 percent match.

## Phased construction

The coalition's plan is to leverage a portion of the \$1.8 million appropriation to match the federal grant and build the new broadband

network in phases, beginning with a fiber backbone from Canyon City south to Seneca, with laterals to homes and businesses along Highway 395 and fiber-to-home connections in Seneca.

The plan calls for the coalition, which includes John Day, Grant County and Seneca, to partner with Oregon Telephone Corp. to install fiber-to-home connections and handle sales and maintenance for customers.

Board member and councilor Brandon Smith told the John Day City Council Oct. 23 that the U.S. Department of Agriculture had awarded the Community Connect grants but not yet notified the coalition of the results.

At a meeting in September, the coalition board considered options for locating the broadband network's main hub or point-of-presence. Consulting engineers noted that the facil-

ity must be centrally located, secure, readily accessible for maintenance and meet seismic standards.

The engineers recommended using the server room in the John Day Fire Hall, which has a backup generator and is just feet away from the new Grant County 911 dispatch center. The John Day Rural Fire Protection District board on Sept. 11 proposed to lease space and equipment in the server room to the coalition for 10 years for \$30,000.

## Network extensions

The board is currently looking at running two fiber cable extensions separate from the trunk cable from Canyon City to Seneca. An aerial fiber cable run from the fire hall to the Grant County Education Service District offices and Grant Union Ju-

nior-Senior High School is estimated to cost about \$47,000, including engineering, construction and contingency.

A second aerial cable estimated to cost \$64,000 would run up North Canyon Boulevard in John Day and connect the fire hall to the CenturyLink microwave facility at First Street. The cable would continue north to the Grant County Fairgrounds, east to the Grant County Transportation District building on Dayton Street and further east to the John Day City Hall and police department on Highway 26.

The board considered running a 96-fiber cable to the CenturyLink facility to provide redundancy to the overall network. When completed, the fire hall would be connected to about 10 critical community facilities, including the Grant County Senior Center, the Department of Motor Vehicles and the John Day Post Office.

Smith told the council running the cables underground was cost prohibitive so they will be strung on power poles. John Day City Manager Nick Green said construction of these two extensions would not start until after the coalition received word about the federal grant.

## Future laterals

Once construction is completed on the trunk line south to Seneca, laterals will be run to other critical community facilities in Canyon City, including the county courthouse, sheriff's office and Humbolt Elementary School, Green said.

At an earlier meeting, the board estimated the cost of running an aerial fiber cable from the fire hall to Grant County Regional Airport at about \$94,000. There is no fiber cable run to the airport at this time.

Green praised the work of Commstructure, which is conducting field studies for the cable runs across John Day. He noted growing interest in the project and said he expected competitive bids.

The board approved a \$6,500 bid by Municode to design, develop and implement a website for the coalition. Hosting, maintenance and support will cost \$2,500 per year.

The board also filled two at-large positions by appointing Denise Porter, a teacher and city councilor in Long Creek, and Nathan McFarland, a computer programmer and member of the Grant County Economic Development Board who lives between John Day and Prairie City.

Josh Walker of Seneca is the chairman of the five-member board, and Dan Becker of Prairie City is the county representative and co-chairman.

# John Day trail proposal ranked No. 1

## East-side residents concerned about speeders

By Richard Hanners  
Blue Mountain Eagle

An Oregon Parks and Recreation Department advisory committee ranked the John Day Innovation Trail System Phase I as the No. 1 non-motorized use proposal for this year's Recreational Trails Program grant funding.

Following a presentation by John Day and other applicants, the committee recommended awarding \$191,300 for the trail system, which will run along the John Day River to the future Innovation Gateway project.

The project must undergo further review by several state agencies and the Federal Highway Administration before the federal funding will become available. City Manager Nick Green told the city council Oct. 23 that he expects to see the funding sometime in March.

In other city council news:

- City staff surprised Green by awarding him with a customized belt buckle in recognition of his dedicated service. Mayor Ron Lundbom explained that city staff intended to recognize the entire Green family because of all the time Green spent working for the city. Green said it was the best gift he's ever received in his professional career.

- Lundbom said residents along Highway 26 east of John Day had expressed concerns about speeding traffic. He said the residents wanted

a flashing radar speed sign installed as a way to slow down vehicles.

Police Chief Mike Durr acknowledged that the area has always experienced speeders, and his officers work that area and issue citations. Most of the speeders are outside the city limits, he said.

Green noted that a solar-powered radar sign could cost \$12,000 and the Oregon Department of Transportation was OK with installing the sign at city expense. Lundbom said he recently received a mailer promoting two radar signs for \$6,000.

Green said the signs require little maintenance and some signs record speeding data that could be downloaded. He said he would look more into costs and suggested the contingency street fund could be used to pay for a sign.

- Green reported on an Oct. 16 meeting with faculty and administration at Oregon State University. This was city staff's second meeting with OSU to discuss potential collaboration and options for the city's commercial greenhouse if it expanded by two bays.

In one scenario, the city would provide the land, water, infrastructure and financing. OSU would provide research support through faculty and students and a regional industry partner would purchase products.

Expanding the greenhouse by two 2,000-square-foot bays could cost about \$180,000. The city would need to earn about \$2,000 per month to pay for that investment. Green said discussion included growing hydroponic



The Eagle/ Richard Hanners

**John Day City Manager Nick Green explains commercial options for the city's greenhouse facility during the city council's Oct. 23 meeting while Mayor Ron Lundbom listens.**

hops — which would provide a year-round harvest for what is typically a seasonal product. An alternative is strawberries, he said.

In any case, the city doesn't have the reserves to go it alone, Green said. He presented the council with a decision-making framework for evaluating investment options for the commercial greenhouse that includes an exit strategy.

- The John Day Planning Commission approved four amendments to the city's land-use district map Oct. 23 that included both rezoning and annexations. The first two dealt with rezoning only and do not need city council approval. The other two involve annexations and are scheduled to go to the city council Nov. 13.

The city requested rezoning one city-owned lot

and four lots owned by the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, including Gleason Pool and property surrounding the Kam Wah Chung State Heritage Site, from residential limited and

general commercial to park reserve. The state is expected to acquire the city property as part of a plan to build an improved state park site. Rezoning also will allow the state to have a single RV site for use by a park host.

The city also requested that the 5-acre property along the John Day River at the north end of Canton Street be rezoned from residential limited to park reserve. Preliminary plans called for partially developing the site with the name Hill Family Park. Because of floodplain and traffic concerns, the site will not be used for a new public pool, Green said.

The city also requested the annexation of the Mid County Cemetery and a nearby city-owned lot south of Valley View Drive, along with rezoning those lots and two other city-owned lots in

the Davis Creek area to park reserve. The city acquired the land from the Hill family this year.

Annexation must take place before rezoning, Green said. The three city-owned lots include terrain that is too steep for development and will be used for a new trail system, he said. The county will continue to maintain the cemetery.

The city also requested the annexation of the former Oregon Pine mill site along with portions of nearby land owned by Kenneth Mills and Iron Triangle that were outside the city limits. The city also requested that the portion of the mill site south of the John Day River and the annexed Mills land be rezoned general commercial.

- The council will discuss options for a new public pool at their next meeting on Nov. 13.

## LOG CABIN EXPRESSO OPEN HOUSE



**NOVEMBER 3RD 11AM-4PM**  
COME IN AND TRY OUR SPECIAL DRINKS AND FOOD TASTING.  
BE SURE TO COME BY AND CHECK OUT OUR NEW SEATING AREA AND TRY OUR NEW LINE OF FOOD.

821 W. Hwy, John Day | 541-575-5778

## Methodist Thrift Shop Annual Christmas Sale

November 7, 8 and 9  
126 NW Canton St., John Day  
Hours:  
Wednesday & Thursday 9-3,  
and Friday 9-noon

## SEAN KORESKE MASTER OF THE PAN FLUTE



Koreske Performs classically, and will play Purcell, Bach, Mozart and more from his recent recording, Serenity.

Koreske's virtuosity on the pan flute, accompanied by the mellow tones of his chamber organ, create a captivating effect on listeners.

Live Saturday, Nov 17th 7-9pm (doors open at 6:30pm)  
Grant County Fairgrounds, Keerins Hall  
411 NW Bridge St., John Day Oregon

Tickets: \$15 Adults, \$10 Youths 5-17  
Available at the door.



## Gordon Larson for Grant County Commissioner

Committed. Conservative. Capable.

Visit Gordon's website to view Gordon's endorsements, blog posts, ask a question or get the latest news.

[www.GordonLarsonforGrantCountyCommissioner.com](http://www.GordonLarsonforGrantCountyCommissioner.com)

## We Need a Leader Who:

- Encourages a positive environment for economic development
- Promotes communication and transparency
- Recognizes the younger generation as one of our greatest resources.
- Has proven skills in strategic planning, budgeting, and fiscal responsibility to manage the county's \$ 80 million budget.

"Gordon Larson is well versed in Grant County's needs. He will be able to work with the legislature in Salem to get better results for Eastern Oregon. He will research anything new, and decide what is good for all the citizens of the county. Any decision he makes will be well thought out and follow the line of common sense thinking."

Sharon Livingston

Paid for by Gordon Larson for Commissioner