

Innovation

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from flooding. A proposed parking lot in front of the hotel will provide 80 parking spaces and several RV spots for hotel guests and visitors. The parking lot will also include climate adaptive annual grasses, shrubs and trees, which will help screen the parking lot from Highway 26 and the John Day River, according to the report.

The proposed event center in the adapted sawmill shed building offers 2,300 square feet of space that could be used for conferences, weddings, community functions or potential commercial food or beverage operations. The report states the “existing steel framing on the main floor down to the foundation can be repurposed for use as the base of the new proposed event center building.”

The blueprint of the sawmill presents a deck on both ends of the mill for guests to view the surrounding area, an event hall, distillery, cafe, and kitchen. The event center will be sited within newly developed water gardens, according to the report.

“Wrapping the water gardens on the north, east and south, the restored wetlands store seasonal flood waters and support wildlife with native shrubs, grasses and trees,” the report states. “A network of boardwalks, overlooks and pathways provide places to view and enjoy the restored wetlands from multiple perspectives.”

An event hall, restaurant and hotel will all be connected. A customer would enter through a shared lobby, which would be the centralized point of welcome and visibility for staff operations,



Contributed photo

The hotel, event center and lobby will all be connected together in plans for the next phase of the Innovation Gateway.

according to the report. At the city council meeting on April 14, it was announced that a 6,000-square foot sawmill for an event space would make it the third largest in Eastern Oregon, which Green said is oversized for the market in John Day. After discussions with EcoNorthwest, the recommended size for the event center was to be no larger than 2,500 square feet. “As we discussed options for the best use of that site —

given the Inn at Whiskey Flats is the working name for the hotel — they said the best economics you can offer is an eatery that can also function as a distillery,” Green said. Green added that this could add options for catering with a kitchen that could be subtle. “We started talking with Shannon and Jeremy (Adair from 1188 Brewing Company) to ask if they would be interested in expanding their business and would they con-

sider co-locating maybe with a different trajectory?” Green said. Shannon Adair said they plan to keep their restaurant on Main Street but accepted the opportunity to expand in a new location. “We’ve always needed more space for the brewing, and we always wanted to go into distilling and try to make what we do now a destination that brings people to John Day,” Adair said.

The food planned to be provided would be focused on breakfast instead of lunch or dinner items along with a possible tasting room. Shannon added that 1188 could possibly add around 16 new jobs with the new addition. Green said the hotel could add 16 new jobs. The sorter shed is also planned to be repurposed as a community pavilion, which could be used for a variety of functions such as

community events, farmers markets, performances and large gatherings, according to the report. “The 12,000 square feet existing sawmill shed building that once served a critical production role within the Oregon Pine sawmill can now serve as the key structure of a new event center and hotel — creating a visible, architectural tie to John Day’s history shaped by the mill,” the report states.

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RMLS

Athletes

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These days Emmel said she has been helping out at the family ranch. “I’ve just been trying to stay busy with whatever I can,” she said. Emmel, who will attend Treasure Valley Commu-

nity College next year, said she does not plan to do track at TVCC, so this would have been her last year. Last year, the Prairie Track and Field team made it to the district championship. Although Emmel did not make it to state, two of her teammates did, and it was a great experience. Emmel said, more than

sports and other activities, what she misses the most about the cancellation is seeing everyone each day. “I hoped that we would at least go back to school,” Emmel said. Grant Union softball player Sequoya Swearingen said she is missing the bonding and camaraderie that came with being on the softball team.

“No matter how much we bickered and argued off the field, we were always family on the field,” she said. Swearingen said another aspect of missing out on her senior year is not getting to have a senior night. “You hear about it your whole life growing up,” Swearingen said, “and now we don’t get to experience it.”

Business

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businesses simply need an influx of modest amounts of cash.” Wyden said businesses with \$1 million or less in gross receipts with 50 or fewer employees would receive a check equal to the business’ gross receipts reported in a previous year, up to \$75,000. Wyden said the PPP — which provides loans that can be forgiven under certain conditions — is simply not enough assistance for small business owners who, when the economy opens back up, will be operating at partial capacity.



The Eagle/Steven Mitchell
1188 Brewing Company Owner Shannon Adair said that a to-go only model would not work for 1188 because brew pubs are too social of an environment.

Wyden said small businesses in retail and the restaurant business will have expenses that the PPP does

not cover. On the call, Adair said the PPP, which she received, does not cover a lot of the expenses that she is on the hook for, such as expired food in her walk-in cooler, insurance and advertisers she committed to. She said the PPP is beneficial to keep the building open so that the business can continue on with projects while the restaurant is closed and pay utilities. “We can pay our bills, and then we have this big chunk of money that we may or may not be able to use in an eight-week period,” Adair said. “We don’t have work for the same number of staff we laid off (required by the PPP), and

many are making more on unemployment. I can bring back the ones that have struggled getting unemployment and have them work on projects, but that will be a small part of that 75% (required to be spent on payroll for loan forgiveness). “Once the eight-week period is over, we may be open by that point, but our sales will not be the same, and I will not need the same number of employees. Assuming I brought them all back in an eight-week period, I would just have to lay some of them off again,” she said. “The PPP is just not flexible enough to provide what we are going to need over the long haul.”

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