

City opts against parking lot alternative with space for food trucks

Green to pursue grant for original plan of parking and restrooms

By Rudy Diaz
Blue Mountain Eagle



The Eagle/Rudy Diaz

A future parking lot is planned along Southwest Canton Street and West Main Street at the former Wright Chevrolet lot in John Day.

Food trucks on Main Street?

The John Day City Council opted not to pursue an alternative design for a parking lot downtown that would have provided four spaces for food trucks in addition to parking and restrooms Jan. 26.

The council decided to focus first on the parking and restrooms and directed City Manager Nick Green to apply for a grant to help fund the planned parking lot at Southwest Canton Street and Highway 26, the former Wright Chevrolet lot.

The original design the council chose includes seven single-vehicle parking spots with one ADA accessible spot and three pull-through spots in the middle.

The alternative design would have created up to four spaces for food trucks and a food court, and would have converted the three pull-through spots in the center to single-vehicle parking for a net gain of four parking spaces.

Both designs include public restrooms and could be used as a location for events in the city.

“At the bare minimum, it’s an opportunity for the farmers market,” said Councilor Dave Holland.

Green said the alternative design would be eligible for funding through Travel Oregon’s Destination Ready grant

program because the project classifies as a Main Street improvement project that would create outdoor public places for people to eat, drink and patronize. Up to \$50,000 in funding is available for shovel-ready projects applying for this grant.

Councilor Heather Rookstool said there was a restaurant owner who saw the design and shared a worry that, while business is great in the summer, winter is tough.

“I get we’re trying to build businesses, but there’s some worries with some of the local businesses downtown about direct competition and the city making a profit off of it,” Rookstool said.

While it would be a council decision, Green said the idea would be to provide free utilities for the farmers market and not charge rent initially for the start-up food trucks.

Council members also expressed concerns about RV parking because one of the original goals was to address the amount of oversized vehicles parking on Main Street.

“I guess one of the purposes that was requested ...

was to try and get some of the RVs off Main Street,” Holland said. “I like the idea of the food court. It makes it more usable, more community friendly... My opinion is as long as we can accommodate two or three RV situations, I still think we accomplish what we were looking to do and maybe put a little bit better use to the property with the new idea.”

Holland asked if adding the farmers market into the grant application would help the city qualify for the grant versus the food carts. Green said the property could be presented in the grant as a multi-use space for the farmers market, restrooms, parking and additional activities.

The council directed Green to apply for the grant, focusing on providing restrooms, parking and a multi-purpose area.

“At least if we get the grant, and we can put in the public restrooms and at least get a portion of it (parking) started,” Holland said. “It would be easier to fund more of it later.”

Resident pitches temporary facelift for John Day entryway

Improvements would beautify mill corner until Innovation Gateway is complete

By Rudy Diaz
Blue Mountain Eagle

Seven projects for under \$20,000 could improve the look for the mill corner in John Day.

Grant County resident Bruce Ward shared with the John Day City Council on Jan. 26 ideas on providing temporary improvements for the appearance of the mill corner on the western entrance to John Day with community-supported projects, such as an area for a drive-in theater, retouching the planar shed and implementing a pool to teach kids how to swim.



Bruce Ward

“If you would loan us that piece of property, the community, we would like to do a project on it to improve the look of our community,” Ward said. “I did a lot of research on this, and there are people willing to step up for this community and fund what I’m willing to do, and it’ll cost less than \$20,000.”

Ward said he is proposing a temporary facelift until the city can continue the progress on their plans with the Innovation Gateway.

“I also think right now, the way the world is, this community needs a feel-good project,” Ward said.



Eagle file photo

A welcome sign in front of the planer shed at the former Oregon Pine mill site at the western entryway into John Day.

“There’s a lot of people who want to participate in this and feel good.”

The idea for the pool is to use one of the empty buildings and dedicate it for a pool to teach people how to swim. The pool would be 18 feet wide, 40 feet long and 4 feet deep, according to Ward.

The first project he presented is to put a new roof on the south-facing part of planar shed. Ward said he already got pricing on the project and contractors who would donate their time to install the new roof.

Another idea would be to add blue pine on the old Oregon Pine building and provide fill to allow more parking opportunities on the site.

Ward said on the planar shed there are seven big bays that are open, which could be used for advertising or adding drapery or

banners from an artist that would have no structural impact on the building.

He said the east side of the big steel building has a wall that could be a possible location where a projector could be used for advertising, events or a miniature drive-in movie.

“Right now, with the world we’re living in, you’re seeing people watching movies on the side of Macy’s or wherever they can get,” Ward said. “I’m not saying it would be easy to put a screen on there, but you could put it up and do it.”

On the west side of the big steel building, which is visible coming into John Day from Mt. Vernon, he said they could add a bigger welcome sign.

The city council expressed interest in the ideas and asked Ward to put the plans and designs together on paper.

The Outpost

Pizza, Pub & Grill

Valentine’s Day Specials

Friday, February 12
Ribeye Steak w/ Shrimp or Chicken Cordon Bleu

Saturday, February 13
Prime Rib or Chicken Cordon Bleu

Sunday, February 14
Prime Rib or Shrimp Fettuccine

Specialty Desserts and Drink Specials

201 W Main St. • John Day
541-575-0250 • Visit us on Facebook

Strawberry Wilderness Community Clinic

Primary Care Clinic for Your Entire Family

We offer a wide range of primary care services for all ages:

- Immunizations
- Routine/annual & wellness exams
- Family planning
- Medicare wellness visits

Specialized Care in
Obstetrics/Gynecology/
Prenatal Services

Clinic hours:
Monday - Friday
8am- 5pm

Time slots available each day for last minute urgent symptoms such as ear infections, UTI's flu-like symptoms, sinus pain, etc.

- Caitlin MacCoun, MD
- Brian Jennings, MD
- Robyn Jennings, MD
- Zachary Bailey, MD
- Emily Lieuallen, DO
- Janessa Sickler, DO
- Nora Healey, FNP
- Erika Adams, FNP-C

Pediatrics Geriatrics Minor Surgery Obstetrics

Call to schedule an appointment:

541-575-0404
180 Ford Road
John Day, OR 97845
www.bluemountainhospital.org