

PENDLETON & HERMISTON

Housing starts bounce back in 2014

BY ANTONIO SIERRA
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EO MEDIA GROUP

For years, Pendleton has been a home away from home for many workers in the city. While Pendleton has its share of large employers, many workers are forced to commute into town after failing to find suitable housing. Efforts from both the public and private sector attempted to reverse that trend in 2014.

The most significant addition to the housing market was the Pendleton Heights housing development, a collaboration between the city and Cascade Management Inc.

The city loaned Cascade \$973,215 for infrastructural improvements while the Portland company built the first 22 single-family units of a planned 72-unit development.

City officials hope Pendleton Heights will be the launch pad for future housing developments.

“The (city) council has demonstrated through this project that the city is open for business,” said city manager Robb Corbett.

Northeast of Pendleton Heights’ Tutuilla Road location, the Village Apartments’ 16-unit addition has already been open for months.

Although the building permits were issued last year, the addition to the Southwest Frazier complex wasn’t completed until last summer.

Before the apartments were opened, co-owner Jeff Zimmerman



A new house goes up on Damsel Court in Hermiston, part of the new Castle Homes development off Highland Avenue.

JADE MCDOWELL PHOTO

Housing Permits

Permits issued and value, by month		
Month	Pendleton	Hermiston
January	3 (\$629,556)	2 (\$318,603)
February	1 (\$235,129)	none
March	2 (\$185,000)	5 (\$904,817)
April	1 (\$138,902)	3 (\$509,539)
May	1 (\$194,630)	2 (\$464,328)
June	1 (\$209,430)	5 (\$1,025,812)
July	24 (\$4,973,756)	8 (\$1,487,777)
August	1 (\$189,285)	2 (\$532,065)
September	5 (\$1,527,376)	6 (\$1,199,692)
October	none	2 (\$321,489)
November	none	4 (\$645,500)
December	none	8 (\$1,610,023)
Total	39 (\$8,283,064)	47 (\$9,019,645)
Source: Cities of Hermiston and Pendleton		

said his units were perfect for middle income families. Last year was a busy year for housing in Pendleton, and 2015 suggests more activity. The city recently agreed with Walker LLC of Portland to spend \$25,000 on designs to extend King Avenue for a proposed housing development by Blue Mountain Community College.

It was also a good year for Hermiston, which handed out the most building permits for new homes since the pre-recession housing bubble in 2007. The city awarded 47 permits for single-family dwellings in 2014, representing a total of \$9 million in new housing. That number was up from 37 houses and six apartments in 2013. Permit logs show that most

of the homes were singular projects spread throughout the city. The largest cluster was a set of six homes on Southwest 14th Street by Castle Homes in the first half of the year, followed by four on Damsel Court, all of which form a new subdivision just off Highland Avenue west of Hermiston. July and December were the busiest months of the year, with

eight permits apiece. Hermiston permit technician Heidi Wilson said the warmer months tended to see the most permits, so the uptick in December was a surprise. “Usually December is our slow month,” she said. Wilson said contractors have six months to begin building once they receive a permit from the city.

EOTEC construction will continue through year

BY SEAN HART
EO MEDIA GROUP

After years of planning, construction finally began on the Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center in 2014, and the major buildings are scheduled to be completed in the year ahead.

EOTEC Authority Board member Dan Dorran said the city began the process of purchasing the land for the site near the Hermiston airport in 1982, and a ground-breaking

ceremony took place Dec. 4. The new EOTEC site is scheduled to be complete in time to host the 2016 Umatilla County Fair and Farm-City Pro Rodeo. Barton Laser Leveling, a Hermiston company, was awarded the first construction contract in November to perform rough grading at the site and install water and sewer lines and the stormwater system. The EOTEC board agreed to begin soliciting bids for the design and construction of the event center at its December

meeting, and Project Manager Gary Winsand, Frew Development Group, said he hoped to be able to recommend a contractor to the board at the meeting this month. According to a tentative schedule from FDG, construction could begin as soon as February, with a scheduled completion date in September. An FDG report states the company anticipates being able to solicit bids in February for the design and construction of the other two major

structures, the rodeo grounds and livestock barns, for the first phase of development at the site to host the 2016 fair and rodeo. The tentative schedule shows the barns being completed in August and the rodeo grounds completed in September. At the groundbreaking ceremony, EOTEC Authority Board Chairman Ed Brookshier said, even after the initial construction is complete,

the project will continue. “What we’re going to be doing here in the next year and a half is just the first part,” he said. “It’s a great part. It’s the anchor, if you will, with the fair and the rodeo, (but) the initial development is only going to take up 20, 25 (or) 30 percent of the whole site. What this will mean for decades for this community and this whole area: We’re only limited by our vision.”

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