

The local building boom must be over

Some people around here might know tradesmen who can't find meaningful employment and that tells them that the building boom - at least for residential houses - is about over.

Some people may have noticed how the "exclusive" subdivisions, where only the developer's approved contractors could build - and then only to a handful of floor plans - have opened up construction to all comers. Nothing spells "it's over" like the desperation of those who had been intractable changing the rules.

Some others look at the real estate ads in the newspaper inserts and the ads in the Preview magazine of homes for sale as well as the houses for sale by owner and wonder if the dew is off the lily.

Houses converted from "for sale by owner" to "for rent" also portend a softening of the real estate market.

But nothing screams the truth like the latest retaliatory action taken by the City of Cheyenne against Laramie County.

When permit fees choked City coffers, the mayor and his lackeys pleaded with the County not to start their own development office. In spite of county builders wanting to work with County employees, the weak-kneed county commissioners first posed as though such an office would be opened, then bowed to City pressure.

Now, after a couple more years of the City government taking permit fees from county development and providing inept service in the form of plan reviews, permits, inspections, etc., the County is about to have the responsibility they avoided dumped on them by the mayor. Obviously, the building boom is stalling.

It's probably not going to be too easy for the county commissioners to assemble a team. Who would want to take a job when it could be eliminated with a new mayor who does not have a mad-on for the commissioners and would covet the profitable fees from county development?

But, this decision to dump the responsibility on the County, after pressuring the commissioners to enact all edicts demanded by the City, is about spite and revenge. And a major reduction of fees related to building outside the city limits.

This move is the clearest indicator of all that the building boom - residential - is over. The mayor telegraphs his punches and the daily newspaper must have put the necessary pressure on him to reach this unnecessary and uncaring decision.

What will such a heavy-handed and mean-spirited move do to the next 6th Penny election? The daily has convinced the mayor that *they* can carry the day - that *they* will overtly and covertly promote passage of all spending on the ballot and that *he* has nothing to worry about. Go ahead. Stick it to the commissioners, they've told Jack. And he bowed. Again.

Remember, the daily's candidates for county commissioner were both defeated in the 2006 election. That had to smart. The WT-E did everything they could to promote their choice's campaigns. They also did everything they could to undermine the campaigns of those elected.

When the commissioners "considered" such a move a couple years back, I was challenged by the Plans Reviewer at the City as to where employees would come from. My response: "Offer you guys more money." That advice still holds.

Things I don't understand

Why the speed limit on College Avenue, by LCCC, increases as motorists are beside the entrances from LCCC onto College, then goes down once past the entrances - in both directions. Whose bright idea was it to allow accelerated speed where lower speeds would make more sense? And lower the speed limit in open spaces?

Why the speed limit on I-80 at the Summit was reduced to 65 mph for automobiles going west when the problem has always been trucks losing control? And the truth is there hasn't been much of a problem with them. Starting down a steep hill into downtown Duluth, trucks are required to stop and downshift. If they let their rig get away from them and plow into a house along the street, they're in trouble. Deal with trucks.

Why the speed limit on the north/south interstate (I-25) dissecting Cheyenne has a reduced speed of 65 mph but the east/west interstate (I-80) dissecting Cheyenne retains the 75 mph speed limit?

Why street repairs were started on Dell Range near Yellowstone at the beginning of the Christmas shopping rush. Is there anybody working these projects that have even a modicum of common sense? When Frontier Days approach, all construction work is required to shut down for a couple weeks. Christmas cranks up traffic, too.

Why the new Library has noticeably more inconvenient parking at the new location than they had at the old one and a main reason for needing a new location was the claimed poor parking. Also, why the Library, near the sissy coffee counter by the east side (Pioneer) entrance of the building, allows one of the doors to be locked at all times. Aren't there any regulations about doors being unlocked during business hours? It isn't because the wind will pull the door open - it's because the coffee dandies don't want their Wall Street Journals disturbed by incoming traffic.

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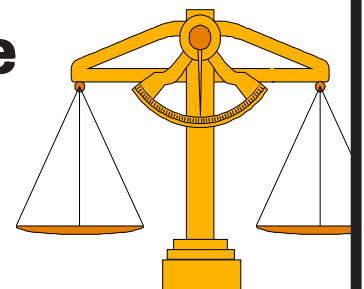
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