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**Coming  
Down**

- Central Middle School demolition under way; Whitney Benefits says 'nothing settled' for future use of site

**By Nathan Jerke**

*Staff reporter*

Central Middle School is on its way to being a thing of the past, as demolition of the building is under way and much of the newer parts are now rubble.



**Tom Kinnison**  
Whitney Board  
President

The destruction of the building is opening up two full blocks, and Whitney Benefits, which took over the property from Sheridan School District 2 this summer for \$870,000, is still unsure what to do there.

"There's been some ideas; we're still in a state of search," Whitney President Tom Kinnison said. "We've asked the community for some ideas; we've had a lot of

people with different ideas.

"Nothing has been settled besides getting the property cleaned up at this time," Kinnison added.

Kinnison said several citizens suggested reusing the building for community purposes or even a homeless shelter. But Kinnison said the cost to retrofit the building to code would be too much.

"The cost, I think was \$6-8 million to rehab the building, and then you still have an old building," Kinnison said. "The other thing of it is utilities of the building last February were \$13,000, and with a 70 percent increase expected this year, that's \$20,000 (for one month)."

Demolition of the building began last week and is scheduled to be completed in December. Kinnison said the building will be deconstructed

sooner with much of the rest of the time spent breaking up the foundation.

All B's Excavation from Big Horn is the demolition contractor.

Kinnison said the building material is being recycled, including wood floors and copper piping. He said there will be roughly 25,000 tons of crushed cement to be made into aggregate for road base, and the crushed brick will be used by the Sheridan landfill.

Kinnison said Whitney Benefits board members all agree the area will be put to good use.

"We have to put it to a good use. The point of it is we want to do something positive for the community; we've also got to do something that is going to help the community," Kinnison said.



The Sheridan Press/Patrick J. Murphy

A crew from All B's Excavation in Big Horn works on demolition of Central Middle School Thursday morning. Whitney Benefits in Sheridan purchased the property from Sheridan County School District 2.