



Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Helping Hands has entered into an agreement with the Northwest Oregon Housing Authority to purchase a building on Marine Drive.

## Shelter: Helping Hands hopes to provide up to 70 beds in a dorm-style setting

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the tenants except for one have housing vouchers and will be able to have their rent paid wherever they go, said Todd Johnston, executive director of the housing authority, earlier this month.

"The staff is actively working with landlords we have relationships with," he said, adding, "We certainly don't want to displace anybody."

The old Uniontown Apartments do need some interior work before Helping Hands can be fully operational, but most of that work is cosmetic. Exterior work will be more substantial, however. Alan Evans, the nonprofit's execu-

tive director, said this work can be tackled over time and does not need to be completed in order for Helping Hands to open its doors.

The organization works with people who are homeless to get them back on their feet with jobs, skills and permanent housing. People must be referred to the program by other groups and abide by strict requirements while enrolled. The nonprofit does not accept sex offenders. The Astoria location will allow Helping Hands to offer services in both the northern and southern portions of Clatsop County.

Helping Hands hopes to provide up to 70 beds in a dorm-style setting. Most of

these beds would go to people enrolled in the nonprofit's re-entry programs. Some of the beds will be set aside for emergency shelter.

Since Helping Hands announced it would be purchasing the building earlier this month, the nonprofit has faced some pushback, Evans said. He and Brown, along with community partners, plan to hold an informational community meeting in March, though a location has yet to be announced.

Comments on The Daily Astorian's story online announcing the purchase were mixed. One commenter said they had "no problem with this. It is not a handout, it is a

hand up."

Diana Kirk, who purchased the Workers Tavern in Uniontown last summer, has said she was interested in buying the Uniontown Apartments property and turning it into affordable housing, but never got a chance to put in an offer. Online, she has commented that the shelter will not be good for the neighborhood.

"It's good for the people that want to move homeless out of downtown," she wrote.

Northwest Oregon Housing Authority and Helping Hands have collaborated in the past. The housing authority offered the property to the nonprofit first.

## Snow: Icy roads led to four-car accident

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The National Weather Service issued a winter weather advisory on Tuesday for across the North Coast. The advisory was set to continue through early this morning. Now, the weather service says more snow could fall at low elevations tonight and into early Thursday.

The weather service predicts the heaviest amounts of snow will likely be over the Coast Range. The lower Columbia and Willamette valleys could see around 1 inch accumulations. Snow will possibly hit the North Coast in the evening.

Snow dusted parts of the county early Tuesday morning but melted away as a mix of rain and snow continued throughout the day. Just when it seemed the rain would triumph, snow charged back, falling in thick flurries that quickly blanketed Astoria's hills in the late afternoon. Several events and meetings were canceled due to the snowy conditions, including an Astoria City Council meeting and a Columbia Forum

talk by Clatsop County District Attorney Josh Marquis. Several downtown businesses closed early due to the weather.

Both lanes of U.S. Highway 30 about 13 miles east of Astoria were closed for nearly two hours Tuesday. Icy roads caused a four-car accident just after 4 p.m.

All of the cars involved were towed from the scene. One driver was taken to a hospital with a major — but not life-threatening — back injury.

When an Oregon State Police trooper responded to that accident, he lost control of the car while rounding a corner near Emerald Heights. The car slid into the oncoming lane and collided broadside with the front end of a pickup truck. The police car was towed from the area, but no injuries were reported.

Up in the hills of Astoria, where the snow stuck around through the later part of the afternoon and evening, some extremely hopeful children and their parents attempted to sled at parks.

Edward Stratton and Jack Heffernan contributed to this report.

## Port: Sen. Johnson said she will help at the state level

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"This is an opportunity for our organization, through the commission, to proclaim support for our neighbors when our neighbors are in distress," Knight said. "This is our opportunity to proclaim our ability to come and help manage the process when identifying who are the responsible parties, and what will ultimately be their fair share, with the guidance and

support of the Coast Guard."

The Clatsop County Board of Commissioners and the Astoria City Council will both hear similar resolutions at their next meetings. State Sen. Betsy Johnson, D-Scappoose, has said she will help in any way she can at the state level.

Port Commissioner Robert Stevens, a retired Coast Guard captain, will also help keep track of the Coast Guard's cleanup efforts.

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Complaint form link: <http://www.doj.state.or.us/finfraud/>

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