

Garlington: There have seldom been problems

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'We will deal with it'

Cascadia Behavioral Healthcare, a Portland nonprofit, provides mental health and addiction treatment, along with other services such as walk-in crisis centers and supportive housing.

The nonprofit, which has more than 850 housing units, has played an outsized role in providing care and developing and managing affordable housing.

The Garlington Center campus was the first of its kind for the nonprofit, which has historically focused on smaller housing developments that serve people with mental illness and addictions.

The nonprofit plans to open a similar 71-unit affordable housing complex — Centennial Place Apartments — in east Portland by October. Households with children who are homeless or at risk of being homeless will be prioritized.

Beth Epps, the chief community solutions officer at Cascadia, said that while there are units designated for people who were homeless or have serious mental health challenges, it's not always obvious who those tenants are once they move in.

"The reality is, there's people who have serious mental health challenges — and that's just not going to go away — but if they have a nice place to live and have the supports, they're not all that recognizable anymore," Epps said. "And then you realize mental health challenges flow in and out for all of us. So, people in the building who aren't identified may be having serious challenges, and we're going



Nicole Bales/The Astorian

The Garlington Center in Portland offers affordable apartments.

to try to help them and support them.

"I think it really stigmatizes this notion that, 'We're all going to know who those people are,' because we aren't."

Before the Garlington Center campus was built, Cascadia Behavioral Healthcare heard opposition from neighbors about parking and offering mental health support in the neighborhood.

Some neighbors wanted to see a grocery store on the block instead.

However, the nonprofit said that since opening four years ago, there have seldom been problems. The biggest fears in the neighborhood around mental health and homelessness have not materialized.

Epps said becoming an active part of the community makes a difference, instead of "just sort of putting something on the community."

Jim Hlava, Cascadia Behavioral Healthcare's vice president of housing, started serving on the Eliot Neighborhood Association board more than 10 years ago after the nonprofit pur-

chased the property. While he no longer serves on the board, an employee at the health center now represents Cascadia.

Along with participating on the board, Hlava said the nonprofit made efforts to be a good neighbor and demonstrate responsiveness. He has given his phone number to neighbors and guarantees a call back when questions or concerns arise.

"It's important to us to maintain good connections with people," he said. "If there is something that's going on that we can deal with, we will deal with it."

Allan Rudwick, the co-chair of the Eliot Neighborhood Association, lives a block from the Garlington Center campus.

Rudwick told The Astorian he has not seen, heard or experienced any issues with the campus.

"It looks good and even has a community meeting space we could use," he said in an email.

Micro units

Edlen & Co. and Clatsop Behavioral Healthcare have proposed micro units at Heritage Square for peo-

ple in treatment. The agency, Clatsop County's mental health and substance abuse treatment provider, intends to provide staff and support services on-site.

Similarly to Garlington Place, the mental health component at Heritage Square would involve units targeted at people earning 30% of area median income — \$15,330 a year using 2021 figures. The units would reduce the income average for all the housing units, allowing Edlen & Co. to offer a broader income range for the workforce units while remaining eligible for the government help necessary to finance the project.

Edlen & Co. and the city have an exclusive negotiating agreement to collaborate on details such as the income mix, building configuration, parking and ground-floor uses like child care and retail.

Since unveiling the concept in January, the developer has modified the outline to move all the housing units into one building on the eastern edge of the block instead of having separate buildings. The change would allow a smaller parking lot at 11th and Exchange streets to remain, helping to alleviate some concerns about parking raised by the Astoria Senior Center, the American Legion and others.

The public will have an opportunity to review and give feedback on the concept during two open houses scheduled from 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on March 14 and March 24 at the Astoria Armory.

The City Council has agreed to negotiate with Edlen & Co., but has not made a commitment on the workforce housing project at Heritage Square.

Job training: Much of the money will boost spending in existing programs with proven track records

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The Senate passed it 23-3 on Tuesday.

Although Oregon's economic recovery from the coronavirus pandemic has resulted in more unfilled jobs than there are available workers, the plan will focus on training efforts in three sectors that will generate more jobs in the next decade. They are health care — which has been chronically short of workers for almost a decade — and construction and manufacturing. Skilled workers in those fields are retiring faster than younger workers can replace them.

According to a fourth-quarter report by the Oregon Employment Department, construction and manufacturing each had at least 10,000 vacancies — and health care more than 25,000 jobs — of more than 100,000 vacancies statewide at the end of 2021.

"With the COVID crisis easing, Oregonians are looking for new job opportunities that require new skills," said Duncan Wyse, president of the Oregon Business Council, a sponsor of the Oregon Business Plan conference where the plan was previewed in December. "This opens a pathway to more rewarding, better-paid jobs, and it makes Oregon more competitive in the bargain."

The plan combines \$76 million from the tax-supported general fund with \$123 million in federal funds from Oregon's share of the American Rescue Plan Act, the \$2 trillion pandemic recovery plan that President Joe Biden signed last year.

Much of the money will boost spending in existing programs with proven track records. Some will go toward new competitive grants for innovative education and training opportunities.

Some money will go

toward direct benefits to individuals — such as housing, child care and transportation — while they are undergoing training.

"This initiative provides the road map for Oregonians ... to get access to family-wage careers in health care and beyond," said Patsy Richards, who co-led the council task force that helped draft the plan.

Richards, who is Black, is the director of Long-Term CareWorks for the RISE Partnership in Portland.

"This historical bill will change our workforce system for the better and create an equitable economy that works for everyone!" said Marin Areolla III, president of Advanced Economic Solutions in Salem and the other co-chair of the task force.

State Rep. Paul Holvey, of Eugene, a retired carpenters union representative, was the only Democrat to vote against the bill in the House. He expressed concern that apprenticeships created by the plan will fall under the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, rather than the Bureau of Labor and Industries, which oversees apprenticeships. He also said that apprentices require on-the-job training, not just preemployment education.

Kelly Kupcak, executive director of Oregon Tradeswomen, said it was a start.

"Together, we now have an opportunity to collectively build an inclusive, just economy in Oregon that works for everyone — so that all workers can support themselves and their families," said Kupcak, who also served on the task force.

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Forest accord: 'This is truly a paradigm shift'

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prioritize nonlethal control of beavers and create a new modeling system to avoid and mitigate the effects of landslides.

The legislation is expected to set the stage for a federal Habitat Conservation Plan for the state's private forests, which would shield landowners from liability under the Endangered Species Act when harvesting trees.

"This is great news for Oregon," Bob Van Dyk, the Oregon policy director for the Wild Salmon Center, said in a statement. "Our fisheries, our forests and our communities will all benefit, not only from the measures adopted today, but also from the spirit of compromise that made this possible."

Several forest products companies and the Oregon Small Woodlands Association signed onto the Private Forest Accord with the understanding that it would provide more regulatory certainty and

reduce the likelihood of disruptive lawsuits and ballot initiatives.

The agreement is costly for the timber industry, not only financially, but also in terms of its unity, since some companies remain opposed to the new regulations, said Chris Edwards, president of the Oregon Forest & Industries Council.

However, there is too much at stake for the timber industry to roll the dice and move forward without the deal, he said during a legislative hearing on SB 1501.

"This is truly a paradigm shift and a moment in our state's history of which all Oregonians should be proud," Edwards said in a statement after the House vote. "This demonstrates it is possible to put differences aside and work together on viable solutions to tough problems."

"Today we leave the timber wars in the past and embark on a new collaborative era of forestry that ensures a future for sustain-

able active forest management and wood products manufacturing."

Support for the deal is not unanimous in the timber industry — critics argue that it complicates forest management, excludes excessive amounts of land from logging and was developed without sufficient transparency and public input.

Many members of the Oregon Farm Bureau who own forestlands believe the agreement is unworkable, said Lauren Smith, the organization's director of government affairs.

"With the new harvest buffers in place, some of our members risk losing up to 50% of their harvestable timber and have stated they're likely to sell their woodlands to larger owners or sell the minimum parcel sizes for home sites," she said.

State Rep. Suzanne Weber, R-Tillamook, who represents the North Coast, voted against the bill.

Under the agreement,

small forestland owners are subject to less rigorous logging restrictions in recognition of their tendency to grow trees on a longer rotation cycle.

Small woodlands owners who choose to manage their properties under the standards required for larger landowners would be eligible for tax credits under a companion bill.

That legislation, Senate Bill 1502, recently passed the Senate and cleared the House on Thursday.

Trail: The cleanup project began in October

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Amid all the coronavirus restrictions, the trail was closed at the end of June 2020 after the discovery of drug paraphernalia, graffiti and damage to the U.S. Coast Guard's Aids to Navigation boards. Hikers who had flouted "no trespassing" signs had to be rescued.

There are two trails. One goes down to the cove and another continues on to allow access to the Cape Disappointment Lighthouse. These reopened in October.

They can be accessed either from just south of the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center or from the center's main parking lot. The trail has a dirt surface until just above the Coast Guard station, where it passes through a lockable gate and transitions into a well-paved but steep road leading to the lighthouse.

The cleanup project began in October and Sara Swanson confirmed the hours involved. Her husband, Jon, is a 17-year Coast Guard veteran, serving as an electrician's mate first class at Cape Disappointment.

"He has cleared brush, trimmed trees, cleaned debris from along the roadway and mowed the grass," she said. "He has edged and weed-whacked the tall grass along both sides of the half-mile road, making it safer for pedestrians to move off the roadway when vehicles transit up and down from the lighthouse."

Jon Swanson donated a picnic table and spent 14 hours sanding and staining it. "This gives visitors a place to sit, rest and enjoy the breathtaking views," Sara Swanson added.

He brought in gravel to make the trail less muddy and give visitors better traction, and repaired rotted

steps down to the cove with found wood, she noted. Part of a washed-out section, which was inaccessible, was diverted. Sara Swanson and the boys helped getting tools, moving the gravel and with litter cleanup.

Iyall, the original poster on Facebook, moved to the Long Beach Peninsula two years ago and enjoys the oceanfront ambiance. She wanted the Swansons to receive some credit.

"I was so impressed about their doings — especially since visiting that spot for the first time," she said later. "They are doing this on their own time, and really helped the walk down that trail to watch the sunset."

Her daughter, Keowah Rodriguez-Iyall, a freshman at Ilwaco High School, snapped photographs of the locale. "Because of this wonderful family," she said, "I got to capture some beautiful memories."

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