

Fire Station expansion will add 20,000

PROJECTS continued
from front page

2023 and is expected to take a year. Tribal Council approved contractor Triplett Wellman Inc. to construct the 26,000-square-foot child development center next to the gym on the Tribal campus.

Tribal funding of \$6.5 million combined with \$6.5 million of federal American Rescue Plan Act funds, \$2 million from nonprofits and \$1 million in federal grants will finance the project.

The one-story building will have 12 classrooms, 16 administrative offices, a commercial kitchen, large community room, outdoor play areas, break room, restrooms and support areas.

Creekside Elder Housing: These newly constructed Tribal Elder housing units are located at Grand Ronde Road and Creekside Drive, behind existing Elder housing. Twelve duplexes (two housing units each) are fitted with solar energy panels and battery backup storage.

Eighteen of the units are market rate and six will be subsidized.

The \$7.19 million project was funded with 80 percent Tribal dollars and 20 percent federal grant funds.

A grand opening for the project was held on Wednesday, Jan. 24. See the sidebar for a related story.

Wind River Apartments, phase three: The design phase is scheduled to be finished this summer with construction to begin soon after. There will be up to 45 units which are a mix of one- and two-bedrooms within 10 apartment buildings.

“The design and construction cost is estimated to be around \$12.5 million, currently all Tribal funds, however we will be applying for grants to help with the cost of this project,” Webb said.

Located adjacent to the Tribe’s Housing Department offices at 28450 Tyee Road, the solar-ready designs provide the option to add solar panels with Energy Trust of Oregon.

Electric vehicle charging stations: Electric vehicle chargers will be added to campus this year thanks to a \$700,000 grant from the Oregon Department of Transportation’s Carbon Reduction Program.

The grant also funds the purchase of a few new EV fleet vehicles for Tribal employees to use.

There is already one charging

Open house event held at Creekside Elder site

By Danielle Harrison
Smoke Signals editor

Grand Ronde’s newest housing option for its Elders will soon be ready for occupancy.

The 12-duplex, 24-unit Creekside Elder Housing site, located at Grand Ronde Road and Creekside Drive, has been under construction since September 2021.

A blessing and open house was held on Wednesday, Jan. 24, under a rainy sky. It began with a prayer by Tribal Council Chairwoman Cheryle A. Kennedy and drum song led by Tribal Council member Jon A. George, Cultural Education Coordinator Jordan Mercier, Cultural Advisor Bobby Mercier and Family Support Specialist Santiago Atanacio.

Kennedy thanked the Elders Committee, Tribal Engineering and Planning Manager Ryan Webb, interim General Manager Chris Mercier, Housing Department Manager Shonn Leno and others for helping to bring the project to fruition.

Other Tribal Council members

in attendance included Secretary Michael Cherry, Brenda Tuomi, Denise Harvey and Lisa Leno. Former Tribal Council member Candy Robertson also attended.

“I want to say back in the day when I was Executive Health Director...all of us worked together on what to do about long-term health,” Kennedy said. “So, those seeds were planted and all of the design was done with our input. It’s been a long time but I’m so pleased this all came about.”

Webb said it was hard to put into words what the day meant to him.

“When you hear Cheryle’s words, and the drums and prayers, to stand in front of these homes today is truly rewarding,” he said. “One of the reasons I wanted to come to the Tribe is to be a part of projects like this. It’s overwhelming and humbling. I think these are amazing homes and they’re going to be great for our Elders.”

In addition to the visible solar panels on every roof and battery backup units in every garage, the less visible energy efficient perks are built into the homes, which

include increased wall and attic insulation, and triple-pane windows. Webb said the windows also help with noise reduction.

“We want to make them as comfortable for the Elders as possible,” he said.

Other features in the 1,100-square-foot homes include energy efficient appliances such as refrigerators, washers and dryers, and a heat pump instead of a traditional water heater, which uses energy from the building itself.

“We’ve gone through Energy Trust of Oregon and through their modeling these are all net zero homes, so over the course of the year, tenants should pay next to nothing in utility bills,” Webb said.

Eighteen of the units are market rate and six will be subsidized.

The units should be ready for occupancy in early March. The Housing Department is currently finalizing the tenant move-in list and is planning to move tenants into the homes in small groups. ■



Photos by Michelle Alaimo

Bruce Paulson, a finish carpenter with Kriegscos Manufacturing, Inc., trims a vent cover on Thursday, Jan. 4, that will be used in the lab of the health care and vaccination clinic under construction on the Tribal campus.

station located at the Tribal Governance Center parking lot.

Grand Ronde Fire Station expansion: The 20,000-square-foot expansion includes office and classroom space, living quarters, and four fire engine and equipment bays.

The \$8 million American Rescue

Plan Act funded project has an expected completion date of spring 2024.

Homeownership development phase one: The project is located at McPherson Road east of Grand Ronde Road, with all 20 homes potentially ready for occupancy by March. Some units are already complete.

Home sizes range from three- to four-bedroom and 1,200- to 2,000-square-feet on 10,000-square-foot lots. Each unit is solar-ready.

The project is funded by federal sources and Spirit Moun-

The health care and vaccination clinic is under construction on the Tribal campus and is expected to be complete by early February.

tain Casino revenues.

Phase one infrastructure and utilities funding includes close to \$2 million in federal and \$500,000 in Tribal funding. Phase one home construction funding comes from a \$1.5 million state grant and Tribal funding of close to \$6.9 million.

“The Tribe will be reimbursed on this funding when it sells the homes,” Webb said.

Multi-use path from Grand Ronde Road to Spirit Mountain Casino: The Tribe received a \$206,000 grant from the Oregon Department of Transportation’s Community Paths Program for a feasibility study for a pedestrian/bike connection between Grand Ronde Road and Spirit Mountain Casino.

Resident recreation center: Design is underway for a new 20,000-square-foot building across from Tribal Housing Department offices using \$1 million in Indian Health Plan funding.

Community input meetings are coming in the near future and construction will begin once the design phase is complete.

tumwata village: The Tribe purchased the former Blue Heron Paper Mill in Oregon City, a 23-acre property located by Willamette Falls, in 2019 for \$15.25 million.

The property is undergoing clean-up that has included the removal of 24 structures so far. The next phase of demolition will include the administration building at the entrance to the site, pending demolition permits from Oregon City.

Road construction improvements are set to begin this year, Webb said.

Thus far, the project was awarded an \$800,000 Environmental Pro-

