

TREE from A1

tions recognize the damage being done to the street and neighboring homes by the poor placement of the trees in question,” stated Hubbard to the council.

The removal is planned for early summer as plans are being made with Pacific Power for assistance.

The city will assist in hauling off the logs and cover crane costs if needed. Total costs are currently unknown, but will be paid through the street, storm drainage, water and wastewater funds.

IN OTHER COUNCIL NEWS

Transit Plan

Councilors also voted to adopt the Cottage Grove Area Transit Development Plan as the guiding document for transit program design and implementation for the next five years.

In 2019, the City of Cottage Grove was awarded a Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund grant to develop a Transit Development Plan (TOP) for the Cottage Grove area.

Over the last year, the city has been working with Lane Council of Governments as its contractor and a coalition of partners within a Stakeholder Advisory Committee to develop a plan for improving transit services within the area.

The 117-page transit

plan document includes an analysis of the area’s demographics, an overview of the current transit system and identifies transit needs in the community.

Identified transit needs in the Cottage Grove area include: a need to better serve rural residents and a growing population with specific focus on transit-dependent populations; a need to extend transit service hours to be more commuter-friendly and support local businesses and events on weekends and evenings; and a need for the transit system to be resilient and responsive to changing funding climates and environmental conditions.

With adoption, the Public Works and Development Department will begin to strategize next steps for improving the community’s transit system based upon the guidance outlined within the Transit Development Plan.

The full document can be accessed by a link on the city’s June 14, 2021, city council agenda page.

Planning Assistance Grant

Following council approval last week, city staff is authorized to submit a grant application to the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development’s House Bills (HB) 2001 and HB 2003 Planning Assistance Grant program

to fund the development of an Affordable Housing Strategy Implementation Plan.

The Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development is currently accepting grant applications for planning studies to support the implementation of House Bills (HB) 2001 (middle housing) and 2003 (housing implementation).

The grant would fund hiring a consultant to work with the council and stakeholders to develop strategies to encourage the development of affordable housing in Cottage Grove.

The city adopted a Housing Needs Analysis in January 2019, which included the development of a Buildable Lands Analysis and new Comprehensive Plan policies on housing.

The housing analysis focused upon developing policies, objectives and actions to foster opportunities for development of housing at all income levels for existing and future residents in Cottage Grove.

Funding in 2019 aided with the creation of a Housing Strategy Implementation Plan, which allowed the city to hire EcoNorthwest to develop a plan for implementing three strategies from the Housing Needs Analysis: (1) partnering on surplus school district property; (2)

urban renewal as a housing implementation tool; and (3) a Multi-Unit Property Tax Exemption program (MUPTE).

During 2020, the city saw the development of five MUPTE projects and the approval of 173 total housing units.

The city has noted, however, that all but 19 of the proposed housing units are “market-rate” housing, which does not meet the need identified in the Housing Needs Analysis for affordable housing.

The grant funding is expected to further aid the city in reaching these unmet housing needs.

The next city council meeting scheduled for July 12, 2021 was canceled and moved to July 19.

Public meetings are being held virtually and the public is encouraged to attend meetings online or by phone until COVID-19 restrictions are eased to allow for in-person gathering.

Anyone who cannot access the meeting online or by phone can attend the meeting in person in the council chambers at Cottage Grove City Hall.

In following social distancing guidelines from Lane County Public Health authority, the chambers are limited to 10 people at a time.

Officer Hernandez recognized for heroic action

On April 16, 2021, a felon fled from a Bureau of Land Management (BLM) ranger to avoid apprehension and engaged in a 14-mile vehicle pursuit in the Cottage Grove area.

Law enforcement units from the Lane County Sheriff’s Office, Oregon State Police and Cottage Grove Police Department joined the pursuit to stop the dangerous suspect before he could injure or kill innocent bystanders.

During the pursuit, Officer Hernandez took the initiative to set up spike strips on State Highway 99 to disable the fleeing vehicle.

Hernandez’s deploy-

ment of spike strips exposed him to a very dangerous situation where he could have been struck by the fleeing vehicle. Nevertheless, Hernandez’s courage allowed him to successfully flatten all four of the suspect’s vehicle tires, which ultimately ended the pursuit.

The suspect was apprehended on multiple felony and misdemeanor charges due to Hernandez’s actions.

Hernandez was presented with a Bureau of Land Management Challenge Coin and a custom engraved knife as well as a letter acknowledging him for his service.

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