Submitted photo

An artist rendering of the exterior of Partners In Care's new 12-bed in-patient facility, which doubles the size of its current space.

Hospice

Continued from A1

"When we learned about the Hospice House project, we were keen to help inspire others to join us in donating to complete the campaign."

Construction has already begun on the facility and it will open in the fall. The licensed specialty hospital accepts patients from St. Charles Health System, physicians and other hospice organizations when intensive hospice care is needed. A misconception is that Hospice House is a place people go to die. But only half of the patients actually die there, others return home when their symptoms are managed. A doctor's order is needed for at-home or in-patient hospice care.

This is the first construction project for the nonprofit organization since 2003, Alexander said. Partners In Care serves Central Oregon and has branch offices in Redmond and La Pine. The bulk of its efforts, however, are with in-home or care facility hospice services. On average, about 220 patients receive services at any point in time. Hospice House is a 24/7 in-patient facility staffed by medical professionals.

"It's part of the completeness of our program," Alexander said.

Sandy Garner experienced this first hand when her husband was transferred from St. Charles Bend to Hospice House. Garner was unable to care for her husband at home, and Hospice House served as a great place for his end-of-life care, she said.

The lifelong Bend resident said that because of her experience she made a donation to the campaign and joined the Partners In Care board of directors.

"It was a wonderful experience," Garner said. "I just couldn't care for him myself and there was someone there to answer the questions.

"It was the perfect place for him when we knew he was going to pass."

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Bus stops

Continued from A1

This is in part because in the past it has been logistically difficult to get city approval to add something like a bench, or a bus shelter, Breault said.

But CET is hoping to change that by amending an agreement the agency has with the city, Breault said. The change could allow CET to quickly improve more than 50 bus stops that are without shelters or benches.

Of the roughly 200 bus stops in Bend, about 100 have benches or shelters, she said.

"I'm really excited because it's such a quick and easy fix that makes the experience of taking transit better," Breault said.

Currently, if CET wants to put in a bench or add a shelter to a stop it needs to get a permit to work in the city's right of way. The permit process requires a site plan, as well as traffic and safety plans, which requires software and staffing CET can't afford to have.

The permit process could take three to four months before a bench could even be installed, Breault said.

"'Inherently, a lot of those necessary requirements to just put in a bench deterred us from doing so because we'd get stuck at the permit office," Breault said.

An amendment to the current agreement, which allows CET to work in the city's right of way, would allow the transit agency to quickly install benches and shelters that have been sitting unused in their storage for years, Breault said.

"They take only 10 minutes to install," Breault said.

Susanna Julber, a senior project and policy manager at the city, said the reason CET currently has to go through this permit process is because the city only has one path to allow construction of any kind in the city's right of way.

Conversations about making the process less onerous for the transit agency came up when the city was working with CET on renewing the agreement, Julber said.

"We've continued to evolve and look at our processes," Julber said.

Breault said she hopes the amendment is approved in the next few months.

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IMMIGRATION REFORM

Biden plans early legislation to offer legal status

BY CINDY CARCAMO, ANDREA CASTILLO AND MOLLY O'TOOLE

Los Angeles Times

LOS ANGELES — During his first days in office, President-elect Joe Biden plans to send a groundbreaking legislative package to Congress to address the long-elusive goal of immigration reform, including what's certain to be a controversial centerpiece: a pathway to citizenship for an estimated 11 million immigrants who are in the country without legal status, according to immigrant rights activists in communication with the Biden-Harris transition team.

The bill also would provide a shorter pathway to citizenship for hundreds of thousands of people with temporary protected status and beneficiaries of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals who were brought to the U.S. as children, and probably also for certain front-line essential workers, vast numbers of whom are immigrants.

In a significant departure from many previous immigration bills passed under both Democratic and Republican administrations, the proposed legislation would not contain any provisions directly linking an expansion of immigration with stepped-up enforcement and security measures, said Marielena Hincapié, executive director of the National Immigration Law Center Immigrant Justice Fund, who has been consulted on the proposal by Biden staffers.

Project

Continued from A1

Although Powell submitted a site plan to the city of Bend in 2019, the company has not provided city and state transportation officials with an update in more than five months.

A representative from Powell Development, did not return a message seeking further comment.

Costco and Fred Meyer representatives also declined to comment, but explained the plans are not immediate.

"We are excited about the Bend market and we would like to bring a new store to the North Bend area," said Jeffery Temple, director of corporate affairs at Fred Meyer.

"However, we are unable to provide a firm commitment at this time."

Russell Grayson, Bend's development services director, said Powell Development's plans are in a holding pattern.

City documents show plans to develop 52 acres along U.S. Highway 20 between Cooley Road and Robal Lane. The property would house Costco, Fred Meyer and a senior living facility.

"Our understanding is that is still the main component of the project, but again I can't confirm or deny anything on that because we have not gotten an update in several months," Grayson said.

The last contact the city had with Powell Development was in August, when the city agreed to build a road that would connect Highway 20 and Hunnell Road to increase access south of the proposed development.

Powell Development still needs to submit a master plan and make additional agreements with the city, Grayson said. Until that happens, the development is on hold, he said.

In the meantime, ODOT is moving forward with its highway project. This spring, the department will start accepting proposals for design and construction plans.

The project moves Highway 97 on a new route north of Empire Avenue and converts the existing highway into an extension of NE Third Street. The new routes will split travelers, who either want to continue driving toward Redmond or remain in town and shop at the nearby retail stores, Murphy said.

"The current alignment becomes tentatively a city street," Murphy said. "That way folks who just want to go there would tend to avoid the new alignment."

Miranda Wells, ODOT manager for the project, said increasing traffic congestion and safety concerns was the motivation behind the project.

Peak traffic counts at Highway 97 and Empire Avenue have reached nearly 60,000 vehicles per day in recent years. The highest traffic count recorded last year at the interaction was 57,552 vehicles per day in August, according to ODOT data.

"We've always known something needs to be done here," Well said.

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