

# Sidewalk plan in line for federal funds

The Columbia Press

Warrenton's plans to build sidewalks along Main Avenue from downtown to the high school got another boost this week.

Funding for the pedestrian route was included in House Resolution 8294, which appropriates funding for transportation, housing, agriculture, energy, veterans and other services. The legislation now moves on to the Senate.

City officials had been discouraged, unsure how and when the project would be fully funded. At the last city commission meeting, leaders were forced -- due to inflation and unexpected challenges -- to scale back a small step in the sidewalk plan that had re-

ceived state funding.

"Over the last couple months, we started to hear from Congresswoman Bonamici's office that our project would be included in the funding request," Public Works Director Collin Stelzig said Wednesday. "So this is very good news."

The Main Avenue/OR 104 Pedestrian Route is slated to receive \$1.26 million, which would complete the city's project and include bus stop improvements, pedestrian and wheelchair access, and the addition of a crosswalk in front of the high school.

Under the rules of the House Appropriations Committee, members of Congress each can submit up to 15 community project funding requests for consideration during the

fiscal year 2023 appropriations legislative process.

Ten of the 15 projects submitted by U.S. Rep. Suzanne Bonamici, D-Ore., made it into the resolution.

The Warrenton project is the only one on the list for Clatsop County.

"I'm grateful that the House approved funding I requested for 10 community projects that will make our communities stronger, safer, and more equitable," Bonamici said in announcing the bill's passage in the House.

"These projects, submitted by Oregonians, will help meet community needs while strengthening our economy," she said. "I will continue working to get the funding for these projects over the finish line in the Senate."

## Business & Development Tidbits

### City approves 22-year lease for cell tower at marina

The city of Warrenton has approved a 22-year lease extension for a cellular tower on Warrenton Marina property.

The current lease with Crystal Communications, which owns the Cingular Wireless tower, was to expire in December 2024. The company requested an extension.

Every property the city leases has come under scrutiny in the past few years as current city commissioners have bemoaned the below-market deals approved in the past. Most properties have been appraised recently; at least two have been sold.

The 3,000-square-foot parcel at 825 N.E. First Court, currently is rented to Crystal for \$666 per month.

The new lease, which was unanimously approved July 12, includes a one-time fee of \$10,000 plus \$900 per month with a 3 percent increase every year beginning April 2026.

#### HEAD START

Speaking of city-owned

properties, city commissioners are expected to finalize the disposal of two properties on Tuesday.

The Head Start building in Robinson Community Park and the old Hammond Town Hall both are on the agenda.

Commissioners will decide whether to ask voters to approve a gift of the taxpayer-owned Head Start building to the nonprofit Community Action Team. The structure is valued at more than \$100,000 and, by city charter, requires a vote of the people.

They're also expected to approve an agreement giving the old town hall to the Fort Stevens VFW post. The structure has been appraised below \$100,000 and the city will retain ownership of the land.

While neither item includes a public hearing, residents can express their opinions at the start of the meeting, which begins at 6 p.m. Tuesday at City Hall, 225 S. Main Ave.

#### PIER 2 REPAIRS

The entrance to Pier 2 at the Port of Astoria will be rehabilitated and resurfaced sometime before the end of 2022.

Port commissioners voted unanimously this month to take on the project, which is part of a larger rehabilitation at the pier, because wear and tear from vehicle traffic and weather have caused considerable erosion, according to Joe Tadei, port maintenance director.

The project is expected to cost \$41,500 and will be completed by Bayview Asphalt of Seaside.

#### FLOOD VALLEY CLOSES

Flood Valley Taphouse next to the Shilo Inn has closed.

"Unfortunately, there have been many challenges from COVID, coastal flooding, snowstorms, supply chain issues, and lack of staff," owner Chris Rohr wrote on the restaurant's Facebook page. "This isn't the end of Flood Valley, just the beginning of the next road to our destination."

### 988 crisis line goes live

There's a new emergency phone number for people in crisis: 988.

Just as 911 is an easy-to-remember number for crime and medical emergencies, the 988 line connects people with behavioral health crisis support.

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline went live Saturday, July 16. It allows people to call, text or chat with trained crisis counselors.

The three-digit number is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The line was established by Oregon Health Authority to improve access to crisis services in a way that meets the country's growing suicide and mental health-related crisis care needs, according to OHA Director Patrick Allen.

"Too many people in Oregon don't have easy, quick access to the support and care they need when facing a mental health crisis," Allen said. "While fully implementing a transformative

crisis care system will take time and further investments, the launch of 988 is a sound first step."

It's for callers who have thoughts of suicide or self-harm, substance use, or any other kind of behavioral health crisis.

People can also dial 988 if they are worried about a loved one who needs crisis support.

The 988 dialing code connects callers to the existing National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, a network of local crisis call centers throughout the country. In Oregon, 988 call centers are operated by Lines for Life statewide, and Northwest Human Services in Marion and Polk counties.

988 call services are available in English and Spanish, along with interpretation services in more than 150 languages.

Texting and online chat (available at 988lifeline.org) are available only in English.

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