

\$1M in bonds boosts health facility

City Council to address site location, funding in April

By SHANNON O. WELLS
The Times

As Beaverton Community Health Collaborative partners work on the proposed facility's planning, design and site selection, the Oregon Legislature approved \$1 million in one-time lottery bond funding to construct the proposed health and teaching facility.

City officials, including Mayor Denny Doyle, credit state Sen. Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, D-Beaverton, with securing funding for the community-based wellness facility, which will house a comprehensive array of services, including primary and specialty care, behavioral health, public health, oral health, social services and education under one roof.

"(Steiner Hayward) was instrumental in securing this funding, and Beaverton will be much better for her tremendous vision and leadership," Doyle said. "These dollars will lead to improved health care access for our most underserved residents in Beaverton and throughout Washington County.

"The city also appreciates the strong support of Representatives (Tobias) Read and (Jeff) Barker on the key committee," he added.

Estimated cost for construction, land acquisition and contingencies hovers around \$33 million, with the city seeking sources for an additional \$5 million to \$6 million.

City officials are working with Pacific Medical Buildings and Erdman Co. on the facility's planning, design and site-selection processes. The vacant former Westgate Theater property, adjacent to The Round at Beaverton Central, is considered a leading site, said project manager Lindsey Kuipers.

"Staff anticipates presenting a project update to the City Council in early April, so councilors have the most current information," she said, noting development on the property will require council action.

Pacific Medical operates 500,000 square feet of medical space in the Portland area, and Erdman Co. has developed more than 4,600 health care-oriented projects valued at more than \$2.2 billion, Kuipers noted.

Based on a 12-week, advanced-planning study, Erdman officials confirmed the Westgate property is well suited to the community health facility's tenants.

In addition to being a transit hub, the site is centered among



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— Sen. Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, D-Beaverton, on the city's proposed collaborative health facility

Health: Westgate property still leading site for clinic

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seven census tracts the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration recently designated as “medically underserved.” An estimated 60 percent of patients will use public transportation to access these health services.

“The study also determined that only about one-third of the Westgate property is needed for development of the BCHC facility,” Kuipers noted. “The remaining two-thirds of the site could be re-developed into a myriad of uses.”

The collaborative has 10- to 20-year leases or letters of intent from the committed partners, including Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Center, Lifeworks Northwest, Community Action of Washington County, Providence ElderPlace, Women’s Healthcare Associates and Pacific University.

Steiner Hayward admitted her support of the facility is

based on her own professional experiences.

“As a family physician, I am all too aware of the need for coordinated care,” she said. “When my patient is struggling with housing issues, or food insecurity, I’m forced to give them a printed list of phone numbers, leaving them to navigate through a complex system. The BCHC will provide a remarkable model of how to overcome these barriers to care.”

Earlier in the project’s consideration in 2012, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention awarded Beaverton \$1.6 million to support public health efforts to reduce chronic diseases, promote

healthier lifestyles and reduce health disparities.

Gov. John Kitzhaber designated the proposed facility one of his “Oregon Solutions Projects,” noting the concept “clearly fits the Oregon practice of finding solutions, bold leadership and strong partnerships.”

Kuipers noted the \$1 million funding windfall is another sign of the project’s growing momentum.

“There is a lot of hard work ahead,” she said, “but the state’s support for the Beaverton Community Health Collabora-

tive has spurred additional interest and support in this innovative project that I believe will allow this project to be fully realized.”

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