

February 16, 2024

Co-Chair Senator Girod, Co-Chair Representative Holvey
Joint Committee on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Capital Construction

RE: HOPE Plaza Housing Project for Survivors of Violence

Dear Co-Chairs Girod and Holvey and members of the committee:

I am writing to you in regard to the HOPE Plaza Housing Project through the Center for Hope & Safety. The Center for Hope & Safety provides comprehensive services to victims and survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and human trafficking in Marion and Polk Counties. Last year, our program received more than 36,000 contacts to our program.

Center for HOPE & SAFETY



Formerly Mid-Valley Women's Crisis Service

With the support of the Legislature, the federal delegation, numerous Foundations, and community businesses and individuals, HOPE Plaza is on the brink of becoming a reality. HOPE Plaza, set to be open by fall of 2024, will provide affordable fully accessible housing for survivors of interpersonal violence and their children. In addition, HOPE Plaza will provide job training and services through partnerships with businesses located on the first floor. Center for Hope & Safety Advocates will work directly with the residents, providing wrap-around supportive services. Community partners will provide other supportive services (see attached letters).

The HOPE Plaza Housing Project, like many construction projects today, has faced rising costs for salaries, equipment, and materials. This has led to a deficit of \$750,000 for the project. This is the final amount necessary to finish the project.

Once completed, the HOPE Plaza project will be self-sufficient. The Salem Housing Authority is providing Project Based Vouchers for the housing units and the businesses on the first floor will pay rent. Those proceeds will be used to pay for the costs associated with operating the project and for the Advocates working with survivors.

Everything is set in place and with your support, HOPE Plaza will become a reality - providing housing, jobs, and wrap around services in Oregon. Please remember HOPE Plaza when you consider the capital construction requests.

HOPE Plaza will change the outcome for survivors and their children for generations to come.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jayne Downing
Executive Director

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because everyone deserves a life free of violence

HOPE Plaza Key Points

- Dedicated affordable housing for victims of domestic violence and human trafficking in Marion & Polk Counties.
- Onsite wrap around trauma informed services provided by highly trained Victim Advocates.
- Job training and services provided by partnering businesses located on the first floor (in negotiations with five businesses at this time).
- Operates using Domestic Violence Housing First model, which moves families into housing quickly, taking into account all the safety needs of survivors and their children.
- Self-sustaining once construction is funded.

Victims and Survivors and their children

- Come from all walks of life and every community in Oregon.
- 37% of women in Oregon have experienced domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking in their lifetime (Center for Disease Control FastFacts, 2022).
- The 2019 and 2021 Oregon Alliance to End Violence Against Women statewide survey identified housing stability as the greatest issue facing survivors across the state.
- According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness (2019), *“A domestic violence experience is common among youth, single adults, and families who become homeless. For many, it is the immediate cause of their homelessness.”*
- Of the 4,424 adults (18+ yrs.) assessed in the 2022 Point in Time Count, 1,404 were fleeing domestic violence at the time of their assessment. Of the children (<18 yrs.) assessed, 129 were fleeing domestic violence.

Onsite Amenities

- Fully Furnished Apartments.
- Training Center with Serving Kitchen (for support groups, trainings, community meetings, and more).
- Laundry Rooms on each floor.
- Indoor bike storage.
- “Dress for Success” type shop for return-to-work clothing.
- Broadband provided and solar equipped.

Partnerships already committed to the project

- Oregon Department of Human Services (co-locating Self-Sufficiency staff on site).
- Marion Polk Food Share (food through pop-up pantries on site).
- Salem Housing Authority (Project Based Vouchers for apartments for 20+ years).
- Marion County Health & Human Services (training for staff regarding behavioral health support).
- Legal Aid Services of Oregon (legal support services to survivors of violence).
- Local Financial Management Experts (financial wellness trainings for residents).
- The NW HUB Bicycle Shop (free bicycles for adults and children at HOPE Plaza).
- Yoga Community (free yoga classes onsite).

Supporters

Oregon State Legislature (2021), Federal Appropriation, Business Oregon, City of Salem, Marion County, Oregon Health Authority, Spirit Mountain Community Fund, Collins Foundation, Oregon Community Foundation, Salem Foundation, MAPS Foundation, MCM Fund, Marie Lamfrom Foundation, ARPA designations (Sen. Patterson & Rep. Moore-Green), and more than \$2M in business, faith community, and public donations.