

Today's weather

HIGH: 29
LOW: 15
Sunrise: 6:59
Sunset: 6:20

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MEDINA

Emergency shelter plans in the works

Jonathan Delozier
The Gazette

MEDINA — A 30-bed emergency housing shelter should be open to Medina County residents in need within the next two years, officials said Tuesday.

Medina Metropolitan Housing Authority's Skip Sipos told county commissioners that he expects costs covering building construction and furnishings to come in around \$2.1 million with yearly facility operating costs not yet determined.

The building is expected to measure 8,100 square feet.

"The floor plan is very comprehensive and based on industry standards," Sipos said. "It includes office space for staff and approximately 30 beds but that's flexible space and we can use more if we need it. It can provide privacy when smaller populations are housed. Other spaces in the development

include common areas and a laundry facility.

"We also have a pet area. One of the things I've learned in this business is that people who can't find housing that will accept a pet will often choose to live in their vehicle. As a dog lover, I will tell you that I'm happy to know this is included in our plans and that it's looked at as an industry standard."

Akron-based TC Architects is handling the shelter's design. It has participated in other recent local projects including Medina's Discovery Recovery House on Northland Drive, Metropolitan Housing Authority's Santee Landing in Wadsworth and a similar emergency shelter in Portage County, Sipos said.

Medina County Commissioner Steve Hambley said the 30-bed emergency housing shelter is eligible for American Rescue Plan support.

See **SHELTER**, A6

SHELTER

From A1

"We're moving forward with this quickly because every two years you have a deadline with the (Ohio) Capital Grant process," he said. "We have to meet that in order to help secure state funding and, obviously, commissioners have the ability to dedicate ARPA funding. However, it takes some time to put that financial package together.

"There's going to be collaboration locally with nonprofits and the faith-based community. We're going to go ahead and proceed with the intent of getting all of this moving as quickly as possible."

Officials said that while a

location for the shelter has yet to be finalized, deciding factors will include its proximity to Medina County Transit Authority bus routes.

Half a million dollars in federal American Rescue Plan funds are being put toward another area project combating homelessness — Medina Metropolitan Housing Authority's construction of 10 supportive housing units on Lafayette Road near Independence Drive.

Organizers hope to break ground there later this year.

A coordinated community plan to prevent and end homelessness was unanimously approved last month by the Medina County Housing Network.

Entities making up the housing network include the

Medina Metropolitan Housing Authority, the Medina County ADAMH Board, Salvation Army, Love Inc., Operation: HOMES, Medina County Job and Family Services, and Veterans Affairs, as well as a number of faith-based organizations.

In addition to homelessness prevention, points of emphasis in the plan include access to temporary housing, transportation, rapid rehousing, permanent supportive housing and maintenance of local support structures.

The local need for specialized temporary housing for veterans and individuals 24 and younger will also be further explored, the plan states.

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