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Media Contact:

Gwenn Wysling, Executive Director

541-322-8768, ext 15

gwenn@bethleheminn.org

Bethlehem Inn Announces Plans for New Building and Progress of Capital Campaign

New Facility on Current Site Will Double Family Rooms

November 29, 2016, Bend, OR----Bethlehem Inn announced today that it has plans to construct a new 18,580-square-foot-building starting as early as March 2017. A capital campaign, which has been quietly in progress for nearly a year, has generated nearly \$4 million in commitments to pay for this new building. Construction is expected to commence as soon as the permitting process is completed and the capital campaign reaches the \$4.5 million benchmark. Capital campaign fundraising will continue to support a complete rebuild of Bethlehem Inn, which includes a second planned facility for single adults on site.

Bethlehem Inn, a private nonprofit organization, provides temporary housing and support services for over 900 people per year, helping residents make a transition from homelessness to stability. This important work currently takes place in a 1960's motel facility that is not only well past its "sell by date", but was not designed for its present use. Executive Director Gwenn Wysling shares that, "Residents, volunteers, partners, and stakeholders all understand the need to improve, expand and enhance the facility for the benefit of our shared community."

In taking stock of Bethlehem Inn's strengths and challenges, the organization's leadership developed a long-term Strategic Plan over five years ago. One of the goals of this plan was the formation of a facilities committee that would have members with expertise capable of guiding the Inn through its future plans. This critical Facilities Committee now includes board members, staff, construction professionals, and engineers who have considered multiple options, but ultimately decided to build on the current Bethlehem Inn property.

Earlier this year, Bethlehem Inn purchased its current property from Deschutes County for \$1 million and hired an architect, general contractor and a capital campaign manager to advance the undertaking. Once completed, this new facility will represent the first time Central Oregon has designed and built a facility specifically to provide the essential services for adults and children in crisis.

The planned construction will expand residential capacity for families by 100% and will also address other critical program needs. Currently, Bethlehem Inn lacks a commercial kitchen, is not fully accessible for people with disabilities, and lacks space to optimize partner services on-site. The innovative design developed by Ascent Architecture will address these current shortcomings by optimizing space through design of the physical environment.

Bethlehem Inn hired a capital campaign consultant, Mark Sherman Consulting of Portland, in December 2015 to help with the development and execution of the capital campaign. Sherman explains that early development of a capital campaign usually consists of a “quiet phase” to ensure key donors and stakeholders are fully invested in the project while the planning is in progress. To begin construction on the first phase of rebuilding, the Inn set a target of \$4.5 million. To date, nearly \$4 million has been committed to the capital campaign.

The capital campaign team aims to pass the \$4.5 million benchmark as soon as March 2017, and anticipates they will be ready to build as soon as the permitting process is complete. Planning for a second phase of construction to finish the rebuild to provide residential space for single adults will begin in early 2017.

Those interested in supporting the capital campaign are encouraged to contact Bethlehem Inn directly at 541.322-8768 or to visit the organization’s website at www.bethleheminn.org.

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About Bethlehem Inn: