

The Palm Beach Post

July 19, 2020

PB Gardens foster care offices near opening

The \$6.6M Northlake plaza will house Place of Hope

By Jodie Wagner

PALM BEACH GARDENS — Office space has been tough to find for the faith-based foster care organization Place of Hope.

But after three years of negotiation and construction, more than 18,000 square feet of space is about to become available at the new Lane Center on Northlake Boulevard just west of Military Trail.

Construction is nearly complete on the \$6.6 million complex that will be used for executive offices for Place of Hope and a handful of other tenants.

The nonprofit is building the complex on land previously occupied by a pair of blighted homes, said Charles Bender, Place of Hope's CEO.

Palm Beach County commissioners changed the zoning of the land in 2018, clearing the way for Place of Hope to build its new office complex, which will include two buildings separated by a breezeway. The nonprofit will occupy a portion of both buildings, and will lease the remaining space to make money to pay for its programs for foster youth, homeless youth and families, Bender said.

A handful of tenants already have committed to renting space at the complex, including Wall Private Wealth Inc., and the Berlin Family Foundation. Those tenants, as with others that are considering renting the remaining space, are longtime supporters of Place of Hope, Bender said.

Founded in 1999, Palm Beach Gardens-based Place of Hope provides family-style foster care, family outreach and intervention, adoption and foster care recruitment, and transitional housing and support services for abused, abandoned and neglected children and families in need.

"We're going to be able to have our supporters engage with the community and with members of our team, and we really think that's going to generate interest in Place of Hope," Bender said. "It's the whole idea of a social enterprise.

"We're a nonprofit doing things like a forprofit type of venture, but at the end of the day, it just really funnels right into taking care of kids. That's really the most exciting part."

With more than 345 abused children, homeless youth, pregnant teens and human trafficking survivors in daily residential care spanning six



The Lane Center on Northlake Boulevard west of Military Trail is nearing completion. Nonprofit foster care organization Place of Hope is building the complex, and will use a portion of the space for its executive offices. The remainder of the space will be leased. [GREG LOVETT/PALMBEACHPOST.COM]



Palm Beach County commissioners changed the zoning of the land in 2018, clearing the way for Place of Hope to build the new complex. [GREG LOVETT/PALMBEACHPOST.COM]

counties, Place of Hope has grown into the largest traditional foster home provider in the area.

More than 90 fulltime and part-time employees work on multiple campuses, and more space was needed for offices, training and other ancillary uses, Bender said.

“Up in the Treasure Coast we rent some space, and we built a building in Martin County,” Bender said. “And down here, we needed space for headquarters, and also for our Palm Beach County staff.”

The Lane Center will provide plenty of space when it opens next month.

“We’re at the point now where it’s going to be 4, 5, 6 weeks just to get all the pretty stuff done,” Bender said. “But the heavy stuff is just about done.”



The Lane Center will include two buildings separated by a breezeway. Construction is expected to be complete next month. [GREG LOVETT/PALM-BEACHPOST.COM]