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Southwest Health moves forward with \$30M expansion

Limited-sales tax to fund project



Photo by: Courtesy illustration

This rendering depicts a new medical office building planned at Southwest Memorial Hospital.

The Journal

The Montezuma County Hospital District and Southwest Health System Board of Directors authorized a \$30 million building project on the Southwest Health System campus in Cortez at a joint meeting on Aug. 24.

Initial phases of the project will include a medical office building, 20-bed inpatient wing and a five-bay emergency medical services station and training center.

The Southwest Health System team, MCHD Board of Directors and Southwest Health System Board of Directors are excited to move forward with this project and are looking forward to providing the best healthcare team and services for the community, SHS Marketing Director Haley Leonard said in a news release.

The medical office building will house up to 30 medical providers and specialists including family medicine, orthopedics, podiatry, internal medicine, obstetrics and gynecology and general surgery. This building will include a retail pharmacy, X-ray capabilities, vaccination clinic and Coumadin clinic attached to the main hospital campus for easy access to additional services. The Mancos health clinic with Dr. Maria Cornelius and Physician's Assistant Crysta Jones will remain in its current location to serve Mancos.

The EMS station will house the Southwest Memorial Hospital EMS Training center, a nationally accredited EMT and continuing education training program for first responders and community members. It also will house a continually expanding fleet of ambulances that serve Montezuma County and surrounding areas. A new ambulance will arrive Oct. 1 to add additional support to the EMS team, and a grant for two additional ambulances was awarded earlier in 2016 for arrival in summer of 2017.

The inpatient wing will replace the current second floor at Southwest Memorial Hospital. Benefits of this new wing include high levels of safety and security, new electronic health record capabilities, expanded areas for family waiting, a new family birthing center with full-service labor, delivery, recovery, and postpartum rooms. The medical imaging department will feature a women's health center with a new 3-D Tomosynthesis Mammography machine which will improve breast tissue images, allowing radiologists to examine tissue in finer detail.

Plans for the proposed emergency department are complete and will be a part of the final phase of the project. Due to the limited funds available for the full scope of the project, efforts are in place to source additional funding.

The ambulance bay has received approval from Cortez City Council members and planners, but the medical office building and inpatient wing have yet to go before city officials, Leonard said.

Community members that make up each board evaluated project components and ultimately decided to place emergency department construction later in campus development due to a higher need for patient centered facilities that are out of date.

The second and third priority was constructing the Medical Office Building and EMS Station on campus to provide full-service medical care, training, and education in a convenient location for the community.

Vectra Bank Colorado will lead a banking syndicate that includes Dolores State Bank, First National Bank of Cortez, First Southwest Bank, and **Four Corners Community Bank** to provide financing for the project.

Ballot initiative 5A passed on November 3, 2015 allowing the MCHD to collect \$.04 on every \$10 of non-exempt purchases in Montezuma County, beginning in 2016 for a total of 15 years. Funding from the limited-sales tax and private financing will provide the \$30 million needed for the project. Davis Partnership Architects of Denver led project design and Nunn Construction will serve as the construction manager and general contractor.



Photo by: Courtesy illustration

A \$30-million expansion at Southwest Memorial Hospital will include a remodeled main entrance.
