

## Surgical addition construction to start this summer

Written by Elizabeth Barrett  
Thursday, 05 June 2014 14:20 -

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\$3 million GMH project part of \$25 million master plan

A year and a half after the opening of a new doctor's clinic at Gothenburg Memorial Hospital, more building is planned.

Ground will be broken in August for a \$3 million expansion of the surgery area plus new equipment.

Two surgical suites and a smaller room for endoscopes (to examine digestive tracts) will be added to the north of the existing operation area.

Chief executive officer Mick Brant said the 3,900 square-foot addition will be complete by Jan. 1 followed by a three-month renovation of 1,950 square-feet of the existing surgical suite.

An increase in surgeries and the addition of three new doctors (two of whom are surgeons) is driving the expansion, Brant said.

For example, he pointed to annual gross revenue of \$12 million the last fiscal year has jumped to \$18 million in the last six months.

"Births have been huge and surgical procedures have also increased as well as clinic visits," he explained, noting that 15 babies were delivered by obstetrician/gynecologist Dr. Michael Trierweiler in April which is the highest monthly number since the 1970s.

Orthopedic surgeon Dr. Gene Pontecorvo joined the surgical staff on Monday.

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Brant said the addition/renovation is part of a \$25 million master plan that will be completed in phases. Details are still being worked out as well as an application for a low-interest loan from the United States Department of Agriculture.

Bank loans have also been secured, he said.

The second addition, to the north of the existing hospital, will include:

An expanded Wellness Center with a pool and other exercise offerings. The physical therapy and cardiac rehabilitation departments will be located in the building so the equipment will be more multipurpose.

The building will be attached to the hospital.

A new patient wing with 14 or 16 beds. Brant said critical access hospitals, like GMH, can provide up to 25 beds.

Brant said new beds are needed because the hospital has been at full capacity several times and has sent patients to other hospitals.

With an increase in certain kinds of surgeries, he said even more beds will be needed.

The wing will also separate patients with infectious diseases, he said.

For the surgical suite expansion, the GMH board solicited seven companies statewide and nationally and interviewed representatives from four firms.

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Adolfson & Peterson Construction of Aurora, CO, was chosen after the GMH board evaluated fees and proposals, according to Jeff Chamberlin, Gothenburg project manager.

Chamberlin is a principal of RLH Engineering, Inc., of Windsor, CO, and was hired to guide the board through project finance, design, construction, occupancy and warranty.

Other bidders were Paulsen Inc. of Cozad, BD of Kearney and Sampson of Grand Island.

Chamberlin said Adolfson & Peterson was selected unanimously because of the company's experience and qualifications building critical access hospitals in rural communities.

As part of the selection process, he said the firm submitted competitive fee proposals that will be applied to the final costs of the work (building materials and labor) as part of a guaranteed maximum proposal due in early July.

"The board agreed that Adolfson & Peterson was the best value for Gothenburg," Chamberlin said.

The construction budget for surgery expansion is estimated at \$2.2 million (without equipment) with a specific cost to be submitted to the board and USDA for approval when the design process is completed around the first of July, he said.

Davis Partnership Architects of Denver, CO, is the architectural firm hired for the project.

Chamberlin said the project team will work on a financial feasibility study, the facility master plan and USDA financing.

"Together these three studies and activities will be the basis for the facility upgrades and

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improved healthcare services in Gothenburg,” he said.

The new Wellness Center and patient wing will begin in the spring of 2015.

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