

Columbia Memorial Hospital moves ahead with expansion plans

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Columbia Memorial Hospital will see significant changes this year, as the facility expands its surgical ward and builds an addition on the building.

The expansion is part of the hospital's overall growth plan, which began with the construction in recent years of the new CMH Health and Wellness Pavilion next door to the main hospital campus.

"We are wanting people to know that this is not a new project," said CMH Marketing Director Steve Buckelew. "The funding is part of the pavilion project."

The expansion will be a masterpiece of multi-tasking - because the hospital still needs an operational surgical department even as it grows.

"We will be redesigning and rebuilding the surgery department," he said. "But we have to keep it open doing surgery while we remodel."

When renovations are complete, the hospital will have three operating rooms - one more than it has now.

The 2-story addition will be built in a space behind the main hospital building, where a temporary unit now stands. Buckelew said the 2nd floor of the new addition will be used in part for physicians' offices. The addition will also give the hospital needed space to move personnel displaced by the remodel of the main building, and is part of a plan to expand its office, educational and conference room space.

The 1st floor will eventually house lab facilities, in a project that will be completed in Phase 2 of the expansion at a later date.

Buckelew said the hospital will make every effort to minimize disruption to patients from ongoing construction. Construction sites will be well-separated from patient areas by walls.

"You won't see a lot of construction," he said. "That's on purpose."

Another new facility that's part of the expansion project is an endoscopy suite that will handle day surgeries and other outpatient procedures. Patients formerly had to be wheeled through the halls of



Columbia Memorial Hospital POB addition. Drawing courtesy Anderson Dabrowski Architects, LLC

the hospital to go to the surgical suite.

"With the new suite they will never have to leave that wing," Buckelew said.

The renovation will also allow the hospital to expand patient areas and consolidate administrative functions. In a facility that employs a staff of more than 400 people, that will involve considerable reorganization.

"It will be musical chairs for awhile," he said. "But it will allow us to move into the future."

The architect for the project is Portland-based Anderson Dabrowski Architects, who also worked on the pavilion project. Contractors include Rickenbach Construction of Astoria and Inline Construction of Aloha.

"We really wanted to use local people," Buckelew said. "We didn't accept

the cheapest bid or the fastest bid. The board and administration are committed to keeping it local."

Inline Construction was chosen for the surgical suite remodel because of the company's previous experience in similar projects, including work at Providence Seaside Hospital.

He said general contractors will be employing about 70 percent locally based subcontractors as well for the expansion project.

Buckelew said the price tag for the remodel is about \$6 million, and \$4.4 million of that amount is for construction. Remaining funds will pay for new, updated equipment. The Columbia Memorial Hospital Foundation contributed \$500,000 to the project. ↑



This artist's rendering shows what the new surgical suite at Columbia Memorial Hospital will look like when construction is complete. The overall renovation project will add a new operating room, a new endoscopy suite, upgrade existing surgical equipment, and add an addition to the building that will allow expansion of services. Rendering courtesy of Columbia Memorial Hospital

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