

Broken Arrow puts funds into hospital

By: TIM STANLEY | Tulsa World Staff Writer
10/22/2008

One full year after the project was announced, plans for the community's new full-service hospital continue to expand, as does the public investment in the project.

The City Council voted Tuesday to provide \$1.5 million for new roads, traffic signals and water lines for the St. John Broken Arrow hospital and accompanying commercial development.

The hospital, under construction off the Broken Arrow Expressway northwest of Elm Place (161st East Avenue) and Albany Street (East 61st Street), is part of the planned Stone Ridge Towne Center development, which will include hotels, restaurants and shopping.

Officials had estimated the cost of the proposed infrastructure projects at \$500,000.

"The initial numbers were very preliminary. As the project got under way, the amount of rock at the site and additional factors required more work and cost than projected," said the city's spokesman, Keith Sterling.

The city will fund construction of two access roads, traffic signals in two places and installation of nearly 6,000 feet of water lines.

The hospital, announced in October 2007, is expected to open in early 2010.

Plans for the hospital continue to expand: Officials now estimate its floor space at 190,000 square feet. Plans had called for 150,000 square feet, but more space was needed for surgical and associated areas, St. John's spokeswoman Cheena Pazzo said.

Officials also said the number of emergency rooms doubled from four to eight.

The total project cost estimate is now \$154.5 million. "That represents the associated construction and operating expenses over a two- to three-year period," Pazzo said.

The hospital complex, to include a medical office building, will occupy 22 acres, and much of the remaining 68 acres will be targeted for commercial use.

The project's broker, Steve Walman, said economic uncertainty has slowed efforts to attract shops. But two hotels are preparing to close on their sites, and Walman said prospects look good. "St. John has a long-term commitment to Broken Arrow on this development, so it's not if but when," he said. "Regardless of market conditions in the short term, we will be moving forward."

The 96-bed hospital and office building will be built at the same time. The office building should open in mid-2009, Pazzo said.

The city's funding comes from a sales tax fund for capital improvements.

The project is being developed by Broken Arrow Medical Facility LLC, which will also own it.

St. John Broken Arrow

\$154,500,000 – Estimated Total Cost

190,000 – Square Feet

8 – Planned Emergency Rooms