

## Fitzgibbon to construct new medical office building

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Fitzgibbon Hospital officials announced Friday, Sept. 28, plans to build a new 16,000-square-foot medical office building on its campus in Marshall.

The new facility is intended as a response to a changing health care environment and growing trend toward more "patient-centered" care, officials said in a news release. Ground-breaking on the project, which will house more than 25 exam rooms, will be Thursday, Oct. 4.

"Fitzgibbon Hospital is committed to providing patients with convenient, high-quality medical services in an up-to-date environment," said President and CEO Ron Ott. "Our board felt it was time to replace our aging, existing office space with a more efficient design that focuses on the individual patient. The new office building will enable care to be delivered in the most modern setting and ensure that patient needs come first -- from initial registration through consultation with your doctor or other health care provider."

The office building will be home to the physicians and nurses of Marshall Family Practice, Marshall Women's Care, Marshall Surgical Associates and Fitzgibbon Mental Health. Current plans call for more than 25 individual exam and consultation rooms, procedure rooms, group education and therapy space and an on-site laboratory.

Glass-enclosed individual registration and financial counseling pods -- replicating those used today at the main hospital -- will ensure patient privacy.

The building will connect with the main hospital's southeast corner via a climate-controlled corridor. A new parking lot, Fitzgibbon "signature" green rooftop and exterior water feature are also part of the design.

Fitzgibbon Hospital's Board of Trustees Chairman Fred Utlaut noted that the existing office structure had served its purpose, but the new office building will greatly benefit both patients and physicians in terms of convenience.

"It will be a great convenience for the surgeons and OB providers to be in the same building and close to the hospital. Being just steps away from the hospital will provide a better response time for their patients as well," said Utlaut.

He also noted that the newly designed and constructed space should be more appealing to future medical staff to serve patients in the area.

"If we want to continue to attract doctors to our community, we have to have modern and efficient facilities," he said, noting that the existing space had been constructed "on a budget" and really was never intended to be a permanent medical office building.

While architects for the new building are BC Design Group of Olathe, Kan., hospital officials say they hope a project of this magnitude will provide an infusion into the local economy, as they intend to use companies from the area whenever possible to construct the building.

Septagon of Sedalia has been selected as general contractor.

"Fitzgibbon clearly has been an economic engine for the area in recent years. Their latest project is just one of many that we will be announcing in the coming months as we continue to expand economic growth opportunities throughout Saline County," said Bill Riggins, Executive Director of the Marshall-Saline Development Corporation.

The medical office building project is financed by Wood & Huston Bank in Marshall.

"Our community is fortunate to have such a successful and forward-thinking hospital as Fitzgibbon. Wood & Huston Bank is very proud to be able to play our part by financing this wonderful new building," said Wood & Huston Bank President and CEO Barry Randolph.

MSDC has been working with Zimmer Real Estate Services, LLC, a commercial real estate firm, and its vice president, Troy Nash, on an economic development plan for the county.

"Government cannot and should not be the only engine of economic development, but, instead, should partner where it makes sense," said Nash. "In Marshall there are scores of gifted and talented entrepreneurs and administrators like Mr. Ott. It is our job to identify them and match them up with the right resources to create economic opportunity for the people who live in the community."

Hugh Zimmer, Chairman of Zimmer Companies, noted that they "are pleased to be a part of this important project and look forward to doing what we can to ensure its success."

"Under the leadership of Mr. Ott, Fitzgibbon Hospital is quickly becoming the provider of choice for many throughout mid-Missouri," said Zimmer.

The ground-breaking ceremony for the new facility will be held at 5 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 4, on the Southeast corner of the hospital's South 65 campus.

Ott said the Medical Office Building is another step in expanding the mission of the organization.

The public is invited to attend.