

Oakville Today

Oakville Hospital: looking ahead

April 29, 2010 Ian Holroyd

It's full-steam ahead for the new Oakville hospital since the Town's decision last week to help fund the project.

On to the next challenge.

Halton Healthcare Services (HHS) is now finalizing their request for proposal (RFP) paperwork, including legal and technical documents, the project agreement and schedules.

The RFP, which will be released at the end of May, will eventually determine a firm that is ready, willing and able to take on a project of this scale.

"It's a very intensive period to make sure that when we do go to market with the RFP that we have a very complete set of documents so we get the hospital built that we want built," said John Oliver, President and CEO of HHS.

A number of firms (or consortia) have expressed interest in the project during an earlier request for qualifications (RFQ) process, but the RFP will only be released to three short-listed candidates.

According to Oliver, the final design for the hospital will likely be unveiled sometime in April or May next year when one of the three competing firms has been selected.

The HHS is also putting the finishing touches on the local share funding model for the Ministry of Health.

The model includes up to \$200 million from the Town of Oakville, \$270 million from HHS and \$60 million from the Oakville Hospital Foundation, a total of \$530 million.

"As I think everyone was well aware," said Oliver, "if we weren't able to have that Town support, the project couldn't have gone forward. So it was an absolutely critical decision.

"That's really going to, in the years to come, be looked back upon as a watershed moment in healthcare for the Oakville community."

Building a new hospital is crucial to Oakville's future because, while Oakville-Trafalgar Memorial Hospital is staffed with exceptional nurses, doctors and other professionals, they are limited by the facility they're working in, especially its size, said Oliver.

“We can’t get the volumes through so people are frustrated because of wait times,” he explained, “and when they do get in, the staff sometimes try to hurry to keep things moving to get more people through and it really is a very congested, very difficult environment.”

Oliver continued, saying that HHS understands the importance of the new hospital because the experience they’ve had caring for patients at OTMH.

“Just being able to better respond to community needs and meet the community’s expectations better is going to be a big, big lift for people,” he said. “We really are a service oriented business and we’re finding it quite difficult to deliver the service that we would like to deliver, that the community expects of us, in the environment that we’re in today.”

The plan is to open the new hospital, which will be located at Third Line, North of Dundas Street, in early 2015. The hospital will be built with 457 beds but will open with just over 300 beds operational, due to initial staffing constraints.

Although he could not guarantee a timeline, Oliver said that HHS’s goal is working to achieve a 45 per cent opening of the additional capacity in the first year of operation and reach 75 per cent by the end of year two. The final 25 per cent would be reached in the third year.

The new hospital will also open with five MRI and CT machines, but it is not known whether there will be two CTs and three MRIs or vice versa.

For more information regarding the new Oakville hospital, visit www.newoakvillehospital.com.