

MHLC breaks ground for new hospital

\$64 million hospital scheduled to be completed by Fall 2024

DARLINGTON — On July 15, officials from Memorial Hospital of Lafayette County (MHLC) and the state of Wisconsin came together for the groundbreaking of the new healthcare facility.

A new \$64.8 million replacement hospital and clinic building will be located on a 36-acre site at the intersection of Wis. 23 and County K in Darlington. Kraus-Anderson will begin construction later this month.

Keynote speakers included U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin, State Senator Howard Marklein and State Representative Todd Novak. The public was welcomed to attend.

As a critical access hospital, the current facility has served the greater community and provided a full range of acute care inpatient and outpatient services since 1952.

Designed by Eppstein Uhen Architects (EUA), the 80,000-square-foot hospital will feature a new emergency department, diagnostic

imaging, surgical services with two operating rooms, a procedure room, medical and surgical unit, pharmacy, rehabilitation, and a vision clinic with a retail eye shop. The hospital will also include space for behavioral health and mindfulness sessions. In addition to the hospital, the site will house a 3,600-square-foot stand-alone building that includes two residency units and a garage for maintenance storage.

"We shape our buildings and afterwards our buildings shape us," Kathy Kuepers, CEO of MHLC, added. "We have been working towards our reinvention for the last four years and are very excited for the future of healthcare in Lafayette County. Like a kaleidoscope the same beautiful pieces were maintained as we are morphed into this beautiful new vision for our healthcare campus."

In 2022, MHLC completed the financing to build a new facility. The funds

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Members of the Memorial Hospital of Lafayette County, selected contractors, Wisconsin Senator Tammy Baldwin, State Senator Howard Marklein, and State Representative Todd Novak took part in a ceremonial groundbreaking event on Saturday, July 15. The 36-acre property on County K and Wis. 23 just south of Darlington will be the location of the new \$64.8 million hospital. The facility will replace the current building, which has provided care and outpatient services to the area since 1952. The new 80,000-square foot facility will feature several upgrades, including two operating rooms, diagnostic imaging, and a medical and surgical unit, among others.

MHLC

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include a \$30.8 million revenue bond and \$15 million general obligation bond in direct loans from the USDA, and a \$5 million guaranteed loan, all of which will be paid for by the proceeds of the hospital. In addition, MHLC was awarded \$14 million in additional grant funds.

“Memorial Hospital provides essential care for Southwest Wisconsin, serving Wisconsinites who otherwise would face long drive times to access critical health care. This new hospital is an investment in the health, well-being, and future prosperity of Lafayette County and the surrounding areas,” said Senator Baldwin. “I am proud to support the construction of this new hospital to give our health care professionals the facility they need to keep patients safe and healthy, help attract families and businesses to Southwestern Wisconsin, and connect more Wisconsinites to the high-quality health care they deserve, from preventative care to emergency services.”

Construction on the new hospital is expected to be completed in fall of 2024. The current facility will be in operation during construction.



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ABOVE: Wisconsin Senator Tammy Baldwin delivers a speech at the groundbreaking ceremony of the new Memorial Hospital of Lafayette County facility, located on the southern edge of Darlington.



LEFT: A conceptual rendering of the future Memorial Hospital of Lafayette County.