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Ground Broken For Falls City Hospital Expansion

(KLZA)-- Local and state officials participated in a groundbreaking ceremony for the expansion and remodeling project of the Falls City Community Medical Center Thursday.

Originally opened in November 2009, CEO Ryan Larsen said he hoped to get 50 years out of the facility. But, "We found that our surgery volumes have increased quite a bit and we've added a lot more complex cases."

Larsen said as a medical staff and administrative board they decided if the hospital was going to do complex surgeries, they needed the right surgical space to do them well.

To fund the expansion, the hospital refinanced debt from the original construction, he added.

"The total project budget will be \$9 million," he said. "And about \$6.5 million of that will be construction."

A new open in-house MRI addition will contribute \$1 million to the total cost, Larsen told the audience.

They will also be adding more to the Family Medicine Clinic to ensure there is enough primary care for the area.

"We will take the existing Family Medicine and use that for some additional specialists including orthopedics," Larsen said. "Because we love having specialists come from the major centers, we're still going to expand the existing Specialty Clinic."

The project is designed to be completed in four phases over about a two-year period calling for a March 2017 open date for the clinic. Then, the other pieces will be expanded.

"The last part of the project will not be completed until March 2018," Larsen said.

"In my experience in the four years in the legislator, this is really the highlight," said First District State Senator Dan Watermeier. "This happens in Fall City so many times, it's incredible. Falls City doesn't take anything for granted."

Watermeier said the project is a testament to people getting things done while the government steps aside and he continues to be impressed with the projects that continue to go on in Falls City.

Since the current hospital opened in 2009, the number of employees at CMC has increased from approximately 160 to nearly 200.

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