

State hospital project provides economic injection

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About 100 Oregon businesses, including more than a dozen Salem firms, have landed contracts for work and building materials going into early stages of the Oregon State Hospital replacement project, records show.

Local subcontractors hired thus far for the \$280 million project include landscapers, painters, plumbers, roofers, electricians and more.

It's welcome work for businesses hammered by the economic downturn.

"At Cherry City Electric, we view the Oregon State Hospital project as a necessary shot in the arm to our local economy during these difficult times, and we are proud to be part of it," Mathew Steinbacher, estimating officer for the company, said in an e-mail to the Statesman Journal.

Cherry City stands to get paid \$4.85 million for work on the project, which includes installing a new hospital campus fire alarm system and upgrading the physical plant's electrical system, according to contract data reviewed by the newspaper.

Three other Salem businesses have landed contracts that will pay them more than \$1 million each. They are: Oregon Cascade Plumbing and Heating, \$4,077,220; Dallas Glass, \$1,690,400; and Davidson's Masonry, \$1,074,165.

Oregon's 126-year-old mental hospital, located in central Salem, is being replaced after decades of neglect produced obsolete facilities, chronic understaffing and poor treatment for patients. The planned 620-bed hospital, described by state officials as a world-class psychiatric facility, is scheduled to partially open late next year and become fully operational in 2011.

Local contractors

These 13 Salem firms have won contracts to work on the Oregon State Hospital replacement project, records show:

-Capitol City Glass, \$19,948, windows.

-C&C Painting and Contracting, \$85,091, painting.

-Cherry City Electric, \$4,857,492, campus fire alarm system, electrical installation and other work.

-Dallas Glass, \$1,690,400, storefronts and glazing.

-Davidson's Masonry, \$1,074,165, masonry.

-Interface Network, \$15,000 for business outreach services.

-Jet Mechanical, \$31,053, for plumbing.

-McGilchrist & Sons Roofing and Sheet Metal, \$537,783, reroofing.

-Oregon Cascade Plumbing and Heating, \$4,077,220, plumbing, heating and air conditioning.

-Outdoor Fence Company, \$3,920, fencing.

-Stettler Supply, dollar amount not specified, for removing a turbine pump and conducting a flow test.

-Thomas Kay Textiles, \$11,505, flooring.

-Westech Engineering, \$27,000, engineering services.

Four businesses in Hubbard, Woodburn and Dallas also have received contracts for work on the project. They are:

Hubbard

-Valley Growers and Landscape,

Of 104 subcontractors and vendors currently working on the project, 100 are from Oregon or Vancouver, Wash. The list includes 13 Salem businesses, two Woodburn firms, one in Hubbard and another based in Dallas.

For some Oregon businesses, the public project has spawned private economic revival.

One company, Mutual Materials, plans to restart its mothballed masonry plant in Gresham after winning a contract to provide bricks for the Salem project, officials said.

Founded in 1900, Mutual Materials currently has about 550 full-time employees in manufacturing plants and distribution facilities throughout the Northwest and British Columbia. Reopening of the firm's shuttered plant in Gresham is expected to create dozens of jobs.

Senate President Peter Courtney, D-Salem, said the brick firm's comeback demonstrates "how an investment in a facility designed to help the less fortunate rebuild their lives will also provide a boost to rebuilding our economy."

Contracts for building materials, services and workers toiling on the project have been awarded to firms based on a competitive bidding process, officials said. Businesses seeking contracts had to prove they were qualified for specific jobs.

Hoffman Construction Co., a Portland firm hired by the state to manage the project, has handled the subcontractor hiring process.

Steinbacher said local firms have been getting a fair shake.

"The state, we feel, set the tone for how Hoffman Construction Company was to administer the project by making it one that involves the whole community," he said. "We believe they have successfully made great inroads heading down that path and have employed the greatest number of local companies and their employees possible."

A big chunk of subcontractor work — \$87 million worth — directly stems from the state's decision to renovate portions of the existing J Building,

At the behest of history buffs and building preservationists, the J Building's oldest and most historically significant sections — dating to 1883 — will be preserved and incorporated into the new hospital complex. The rest of the antiquated facility will be razed.

Sections pegged for preservation are known as the Kirkbride U because of their shape and because the architectural features were developed by Dr. Thomas Kirkbride, who pioneered some of the first national standards for mental hospitals in the 19th Century.

The core of the Kirkbride U — cleared of asbestos and lead paint — has received extensive structural upgrades. A new roof currently is being installed, despite rainy and cold weather. Extensive remodeling is planned to complete a top-to-bottom makeover.

More than 50 firms have landed contracts for work on the Kirkbride sections of the J Building. A \$4 million contract awarded to Oregon Cascade Plumbing and Heating calls for the Salem firm to replace all above-ground and underground plumbing. The firm also will install a new heating and air conditioning system.

\$11,196, landscaping.
-Eagle Painting and Construction, \$400, painting.
Woodburn
-Lenon Implement Company, utility vehicles, \$69,240.
Dallas
-Dale Woodin Concrete, \$156,894, site work.

"We were very motivated to get the renovation contract for the State Hospital's Kirkbride building because it's an important project for the state and for Salem, and because it allowed us to keep our workforce on the job," Justin Dougherty, chief estimator for Oregon Cascade, said in an e-mail to the newspaper.

"We also felt we had the perfect blend of talents for this job, including foreman Kevin Stickly, who has worked for us for 22 years and has a great understanding of challenging restoration projects."

As the old J Building undergoes a massive makeover, the first part of the new hospital complex is starting to take shape.

The building being erected is known as ABC, short for Admissions, Behavior and Corrections. It's scheduled to open late next year, becoming the first operating part of the new psychiatric facility.

Nearly \$15 million worth of contracts have been awarded to almost 50 businesses for work on ABC, records show. Salem firms have received contracts for painting work, roofing, glass and fencing.

Cherry City Electric is working on the development of ABC, as well upgrading the hospital's existing physical plant and installing a new campus-wide fire alarm system.

"Although we only have several men on the site currently, our work force will increase during the first quarter of next year," Steinbacher said. "We can't think of a more important project here, under construction, at this time."