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VA clinic to be built in South Hall County

It will be 5 times the size of current space on Mundy Mill Road



This rendition shows the new Veterans Affairs clinic planned for South Hall County.

OAKWOOD — A new veterans clinic more than five times the size of current space on Mundy Mill Road is planned for Thurmon Tanner Parkway.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has selected Tanners Creek Business Park for the site of the new clinic, Oakwood City Manager Stan Brown announced at Monday night's City Council meeting.

"We think this is a great addition to our community," he said. "We think it is indicative of what we're going to see on Thurmon Tanner Parkway ... and this is recognition that (road) is going to be a major roadway, where we will see development occur."

The 24,500-square-foot clinic will be built on Tanners Creek Drive north of H.F. Reed Industrial Parkway, which connects McEver Road to Thurmon Tanner. Project costs weren't available Monday night.

The property lies just outside Oakwood, but city officials are processing an annexation request.

The site is south of a new four-lane Thurmon Tanner connection between Plainview Drive and Mundy Mill Road. The 1.3-mile road, costing \$16 million, is set to open Oct. 21.

Construction of the new medical office building is set to begin in early 2012 and is expected to be completed within 18 months.

"We are happy to see that the VA medical office will remain in the Oakwood community and are excited about the project," Brown said in a prepared statement. "Along with providing better service for our military veterans, we also expect to see more jobs with the expanded VA office."

The current 4,500-square-foot clinic, which opened in 1999 to relieve overcrowded operations in Decatur, sits across from Gainesville State College and near shopping centers.

In a September 2009 interview, Dr. Michael Streleckis, a practicing physician at the clinic since its opening, said the clinic had stopped accepting new patients several months earlier.

“We have just exceeded the capacity of the clinic,” he said at the time.

The Hall County area has grown considerably over the years, plus the number of aging veterans who need care throughout the region has grown. Also, newly returning veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan have pressing health care needs.

With its larger size, the new clinic will feature expanded outpatient services to veterans in Northeast Georgia, including primary health care, mental health, neurology, aftercare and programs dealing with substance abuse, smoking cessation and nutrition.

Engineering Design Technologies of Marietta will design and oversee construction of the building.

Alex Wayne of Tanners Creek Business Park said he was pleased the VA selected the park for the new clinic.

“They plan to build a very attractive, high-quality facility that will fit well with the other buildings within the park,” he said.