

**For immediate release
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Whitehorse General Hospital expansion moves ahead

Whitehorse – A preferred proponent has been selected to finalize a design-build agreement to deliver the next phase of expansion to Whitehorse General Hospital (WGH).

The naming of PCL Constructors Westcoast Inc. as the preferred proponent with design partner CEI Architecture follows an extensive competitive selection process of three shortlisted teams to design and build the next phase of the expansion, which includes a new emergency department and future inpatient space within a state-of-the-art two-storey wing of the hospital.

“We have reached an important milestone in the delivery of modernized patient care facilities for Yukoners as part of our ongoing commitment to invest in new health programs and services,” said Health and Social Services Minister Mike Nixon. “Expansion of the hospital will benefit patients and their families and provide an improved work environment for health care professionals.”

Hospital expansion is scheduled to be completed by late fall 2017. The project is expected to generate many opportunities for local skilled trades and service providers during the construction period.

“We are pleased with the progress of the WGH expansion project to date and to have a qualified team to help us continue to move ahead,” says Craig Tuton, Yukon Hospitals’ Board of Trustees Chair. “This project represents the first large-scale enhancement to the hospital in nearly 20 years and will improve and sustain access to quality health services for Yukoners now and into the future.”

The expanded hospital will include a new emergency department and shelled second-floor space for future use – all designed to better deliver care and meet today’s standards in patient safety and comfort, infection control and security. Improvements will also be made to WGH’s power infrastructure to support expansion along with a new data centre to provide information systems for patient care. Key diagnostic imaging equipment such as CT scanner and X-ray will be relocated closer to the new emergency department. These modernized patient care areas will enable Yukon’s health care providers to support a more positive patient experience in a comfortable and safe environment that will ultimately improve outcomes.

As part of the project and to make room for expansion, the ambulance station will also be relocated from its current site by WGH to a new building nearby on Hospital Road.

“With the short construction season in Yukon, we will maximize the time available for the design-build team to work on the project,” says Jason Bilsky, Yukon Hospitals’ CEO. “Selecting our partner means we can get shovels in the ground now and begin some of the important first steps to prepare the site for next year when we will see the new structure really begin to take shape.”

In the coming weeks, a formal ground breaking ceremony will be held. A second business-to-business networking session is also being planned, building on a successful event last December, to give local contractors and service providers another opportunity to promote their businesses directly to the design-build team.

The total value of the hospital expansion is estimated to be up to \$72 million, which also includes the construction of the MRI facility that opened in January 2015. Most of the funding for the project is provided by Yukon government with the Yukon Hospital Foundation raising \$2 million for the MRI scanner.

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