

Jo Brant expansion campaign gets \$7 million in donations



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Joseph Brant Memorial Hospital's long-term expansion plans have received a \$7-million financial kickstart.

More than 500 supporters, donors and volunteers were at the new Burlington Performing Arts Centre on Thursday night to hear about the details of significant donations being made by three local organizations, as part of the \$60-million capital campaign for the redevelopment of JBMH.

The Joseph Brant Memorial Hospital Foundation, the fundraising arm of the hospital, announced what it termed three "historic gifts" to the campaign: The Auxiliary to JBMH has donated \$5 million; the four Rotary clubs of Burlington have made a combined \$1-million gift; and the organizers and sponsors of the JB 2 Day Men's Invitational Golf Tournament have donated \$1 million.

"The foundation is incredibly grateful for the support and commitment of our community to quality healthcare at Joseph Brant Memorial Hospital..." Anissa Hilborn, JBMH Foundation president, said in a press release.

The City of Burlington has also committed \$60 million of its own to the hospital project.

“We are committed to contributing \$60 million towards the redevelopment and expansion of Joseph Brant Memorial Hospital as this is so important to our city. We have clearly heard from the community about how much of a priority this project is and we have responded,” Burlington Mayor Rick Goldring said at the performing arts centre event.

The city began collecting \$1.2 million in 2010 and 2011 through a special taxpayer levy. City council earmarked \$2.4 million from previous years' surpluses and now has \$4.8 million committed in a reserve fund. The tax levy amounts to \$4 for each \$100,000 of residential property assessment.

The lakeside medical facility, the only hospital in the city of 175,000-plus people, conceived the idea of a major expansion about 10 years ago.

The \$300 million-plus phase one capital redevelopment would add a six-floor tower and 76 additional in-patient, acute-care beds. Through expansion the hospital is also seeking to renovate its surgical suites, cancer clinic and Intensive Care Unit (ICU). It's also aiming to boost significantly the percentage of its private patient rooms.

In the coming weeks and months, the campaign will unveil its new image and theme, announce other leadership gifts and prepare for events including the start of construction of the hospital's redevelopment project this fall.

Thursday's capital campaign event was also used to announce the members of the Capital Campaign Leadership Team, chaired by local philanthropist and business executive Kevin Brady.