

Hospital in town's centre when development fills in

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The project is a made-in-Milton plan that focuses on upgrading departments and services, including emergency, diagnostic imaging, medical/surgical inpatient units, intensive care unit, surgical department and brand new maternal newborn area.

"Every department, with the exception of complex continued care, is moving into the new building," Cody said.

In a community whose population has a median age of 35, serving growing families has been a cornerstone of the project.

The expanded maternal newborn wing will host 17 post-partum beds, up from the current eight. The hospital will also open a new special care nursery with capacity for eight bassinets.

MDH Associate Chief of Staff Dr. Jane Wilkinson said the addition of what's known as a Level 2a nursery is a "significant change" that will provide the opportunity/ability to perform much-needed medical procedures.

"Right now, if we have an unexpected sick newborn who needs inpatient care, they get transferred to another hospital," Wilkinson said, adding the new facility "will allow us to keep those babies," as well as those born at 34 weeks.

The upgrades and increased space are sure to be well received at the hospital that recorded 948 births in 2012/2013.

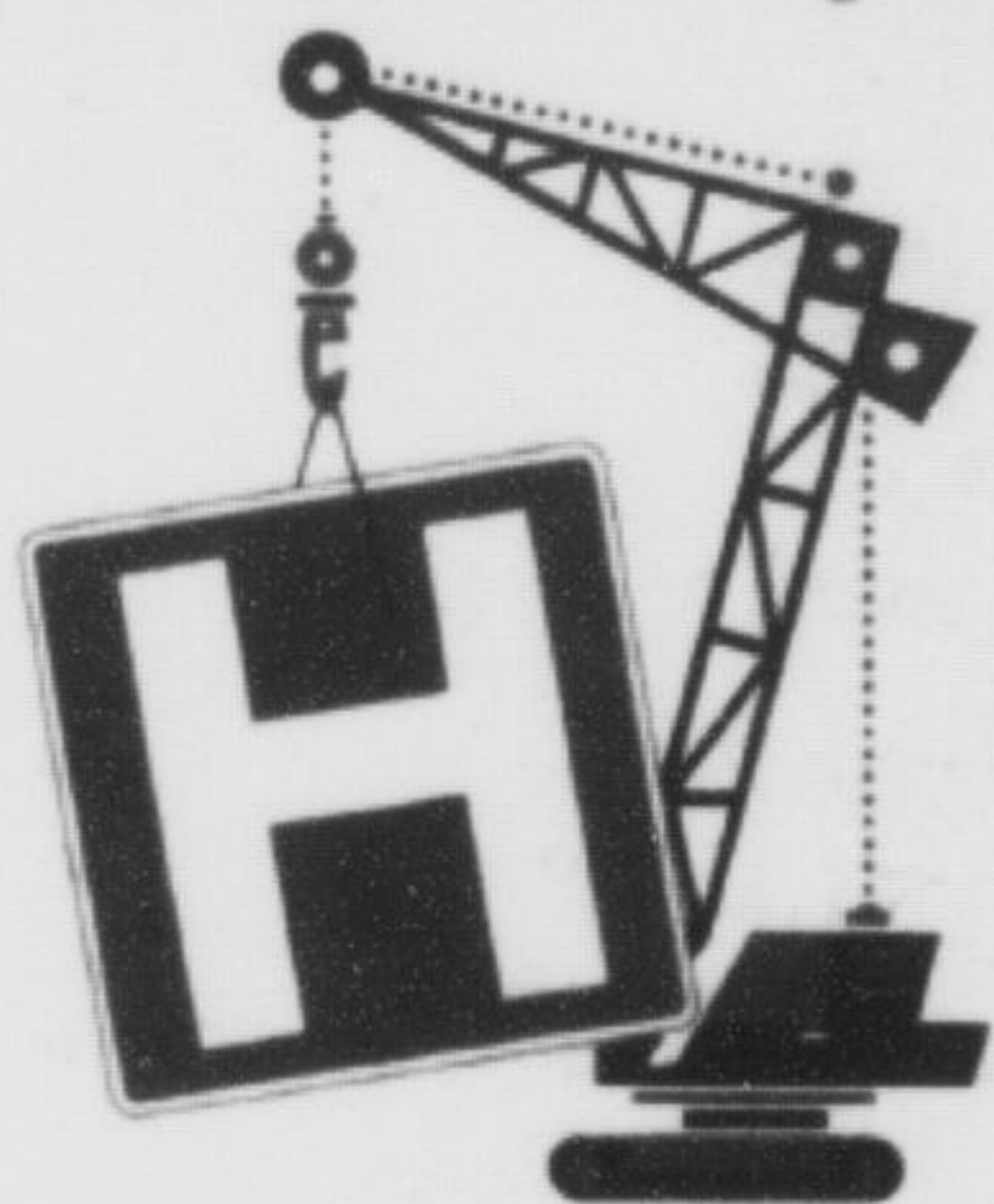
Early estimates indicate the addition of new space will allow for the delivery of 600 more babies annually.

"It will be very nice though because it's essentially like a birthing centre," said Wilkinson. "You walk in, it's separate from the rest of the hospital, and it's surrounded by windows and greenery... it's just such a step forward from what we have now."

A new operating suite will also be added to handle C-sections — the hospital saw 275 caesarian births in 2012/13. Currently, the procedures are performed in an operating room so the new suite will free up other room space.

Fine details are still being worked out behind the scenes, but the expansion will allow the

Halton Hospitals



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hospital to handle approximately 45,000 patient visits each year.

To pay the price tag, for which a total has yet to be finalized, the Town of Milton has committed \$35 million as the municipal government's portion. The Province of Ontario is funding planning and design of the facility, as well as 90 per cent of the 30-year maintenance costs.

Milton District Hospital Foundation Executive Director Helen Vatisstas said a fundraising target is in the "preliminary stages" to secure funds from the community.

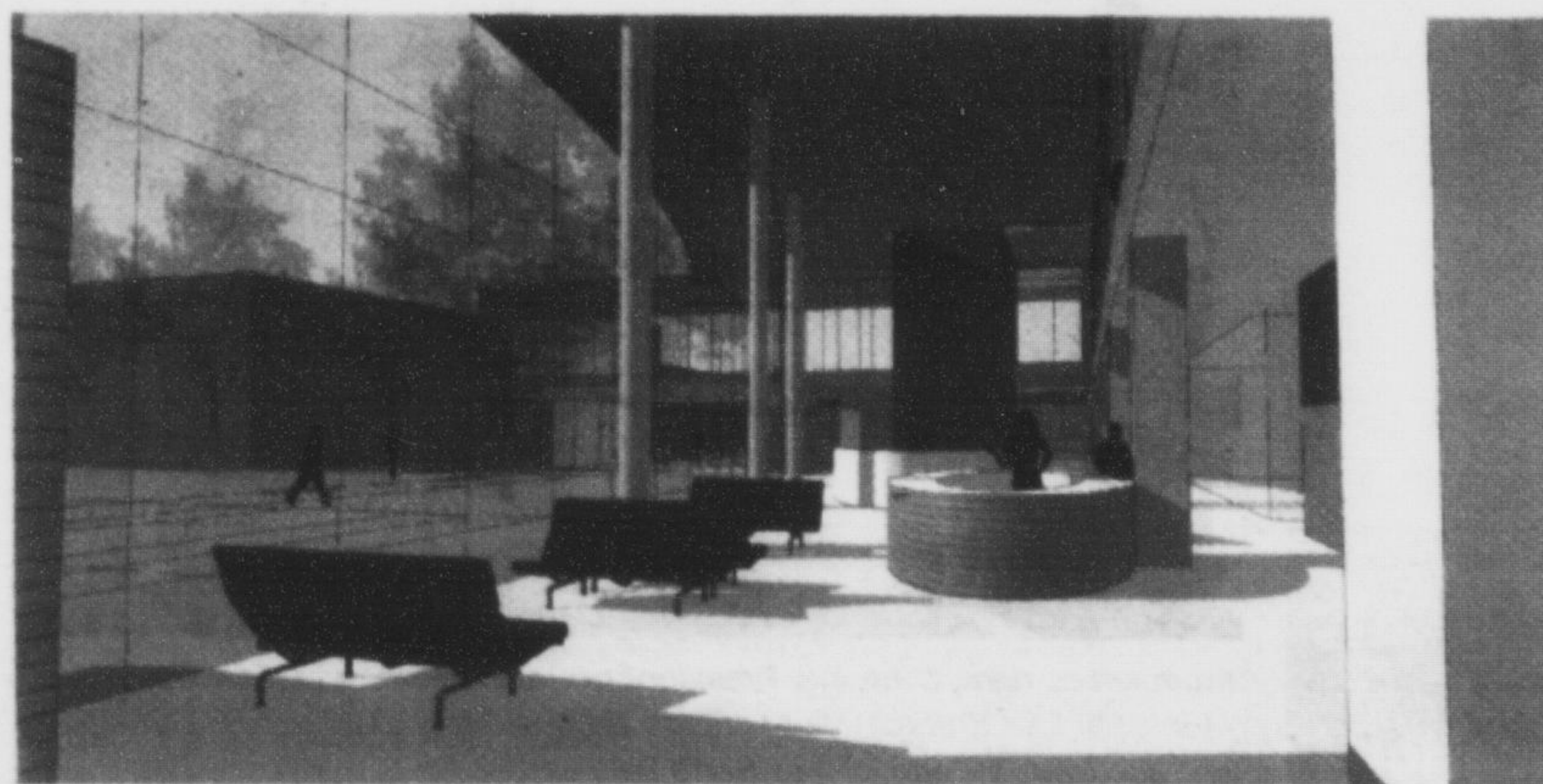
"Hopefully, in the next year or so, we'll be moving forward with a campaign and certainly asking our community to support the hospital," she said.

In February, HHS and Infrastructure Ontario, the government's procurement arm for provincial projects, announced the three teams short-listed for the project.

Hospital Infrastructure Partners, Milton Healthcare Partnership and Plenary Health



Al Cody



The hospital's main entrance will look something like this. Image courtesy of Stantec Architects Ltd.



Tina Depko-Denver



Michael Gregory



Lisa Tallyn



David Lea



Nikk Wesley

Next week, *Halton Hospitals: Building Our Health Care* will look at the new Oakville hospital that will replace Oakville-Trafalgar Memorial Hospital. For all the stories, photos and video, visit <http://insidehalton.com/video/4395970>.

will be asked in late March to respond to a request for proposal (RFP), laying out proposed costs of building and servicing the new state-of-the-art healthcare facility.

Artists' renderings of the facility's interior, created by architects and functional programmers, show an open-concept style Intensive Care Unit (ICU), promising peace and quiet and large windows to maximize outside views and natural light.

Cody said studies have shown sunlight can impact a person's healing and promote an overall positive attitude.

"The majority of the sunlight will be rising and falling on the entire part of the facility so there will be very good exposure," Cody said. "It really is all about the patients."

The ICU, which will be more easily accessible to families, will also have an increased bed capacity of 10, up from the current six beds. Chief Operating Officer (COO) Janet Skupsky said the ICU is currently at 85 per cent capacity.

"What we are trying to do is meet the demands of the community that we serve," Skupsky said. "We know we're just about at the max right now and so we are then speaking with the Ministry of Health to determine how much we can grow (the ICU)."

The diagnostic imaging department will also be expanded and include a Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) machine, to be funded entirely by the hospital.

Milton residents currently requiring an MRI are waiting up to two months for appointments at hospitals in Guelph or Oakville.

"It's something we've heard loud and clear from the community as something that they would value," Skupsky said.

Wilkinson added that having an MRI machine at the hospital's disposal is "a tremendous step forward in terms of a patient's convenience." Expanding operating suites and a post-anesthetic care unit will help accommodate approximately 9,600 surgical procedures annually.

The medical/surgical inpatient units will also grow from the current 29 beds to two, 36-bed units, with a capacity for 72 patients. Approxi-

mately 80 per cent of those will be single-patient rooms for infection prevention and control, as well as patient privacy.

Aesthetically, the Milton hospital at the corner of Bronte Street and Derry Road, should keep its community feel with dozens of trees soon to be planted at the site.

"Once all the development fills in over the next 10 or 15, 20 years, the hospital will be in the centre of town," Vatisstas said. "I think that's an important feature of the hospital because it really will be the heart of the community."

The new building will also "dominate" over the original part of the hospital first constructed in the 1950s, before a south wing was added in the 1980s.

"What we wanted to do is really lose perspective of the existing hospital and make the new, redeveloped facility the focus of the expansion," Cody said, explaining how the facility will also have a green roof to make it more environmentally sustainable.

Some 400 new parking spots will also be added, bringing the total to 700.

The addition will be a much-needed face-lift that the hospital has been anticipating for some time, but HHS also has its sights on the future. Milton's 56 per cent growth rate as well as the latest demographics suggest the town could see a population of 228,000 by 2031 — meaning even more hospital construction.

"We're designing the building knowing that we're going to need to expand," Cody said, noting the facility's 38-acres of available land. The Province has also approved the facility for "soft space" or extra rooms built as part of the current expansion, such as an additional operating room, that can be opened when needed.

"What we want to do is have the ability to expand in the future with minimal disruption to the operations, or the facility," Cody said.



Janet Skupsky