



HOSPITAL SERVICES | FAMILY MEDICINE | WOMEN'S HEALTH | INTERNAL MEDICINE | SPECIALTY SERVICES  
MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES | LONG TERM CARE | OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SERVICES | SCHOOL BASED HEALTH

May 8, 2017

Dear Residents:

Grand River Health would greatly appreciate your thoughts and recommendations on a proposal to replace the E. Dene Moore Care Center and to expand the hospital in Rifle.

**Our community's care center and hospital are both out of space and turning away patients.**

Each week four out of five patients are turned away from our care center (ranked among the top 100 nursing homes in the nation) due to a lack of space. That's more than 200 patients each year. A similar situation is occurring at our hospital. On any particular day, patients have a 50-50 chance of being transferred to another hospital for services requiring an overnight stay.

**Our hospital has never been busier.**

The Hospital District has invested millions of dollars of existing reserves to improve our community's hospital. These improvements have allowed Grand River Health to expand from 12 to 47 physicians, add and enhance services, position itself to care for sicker patients, obtain a four-star rating from *Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services*, and significantly increase patient visits (90 percent of whom are from the Hospital District's service area which includes Rifle, Parachute, Silt and parts of New Castle).

**Patients face long commutes to care facilities and hospitals outside our service area.**

Patients who are diverted from our care center or hospital are forced to seek care in Glenwood Springs, Carbondale, Grand Junction and other locations well outside our service area. This is a hardship on both patients and their families, especially elderly family members who find it difficult to make the 50 to 125 mile roundtrip commute to visit loved ones. And for persons employed, having to travel well outside our service area for healthcare procedures results in much more time missed at work.

**According to a recent engineering study, the 50-year-old care center building has reached its life expectancy.**

In addition to a lack of beds, the care center is plagued by obsolete plumbing, electrical, heating and cooling systems. A recent flood in the basement of the Care Center was a wake-up call as to the seriousness of the infrastructure problems and required \$500,000 in repairs and six months of work. The facility is one catastrophic event away from closing permanently. And given the presence of asbestos and other space challenges, it makes more economic sense to replace the facility rather than attempting to renovate it.

**To address its highest priority facility needs, the Hospital District seeks the community's help.**

The Hospital District will be placing a bond measure on the November 2017 ballot. Proceeds of the bond would be used to replace the aging care center and expand the existing hospital, resolving capacity issues at both facilities.

**ADMINISTRATION**

**Capacity at the new care center would double to meet current and future needs.**

The new care center, which would be located at its existing site, would have 90 to 100 beds. The facility would also feature a Memory Care Neighborhood and Transitional Care Unit for long-term rehabilitation patients. The facility would continue to serve people who need rehabilitation services following a medical procedure or other care (about 59% of all patients) and others seeking long-term care.

**Patients would no longer need to be diverted from our local hospital.**

Improvements to the hospital would include:

- Thirteen new inpatient rooms and the conversion of existing semi-private inpatient rooms to private rooms, for a total of 25 private rooms. (Private rooms help reduce length of stay and infection rates.)
- Additional intensive-care-unit (ICU) beds.
- An expanded Infusion Center for chemotherapy treatment and related care.
- More space for lab and diagnostic imaging services.
- Expanded Patient Services area for cardio rehab, additional cancer support services and eventually the addition of obstetrics.

**Grand River Hospital District has continued to live within its means.**

Since its formation in 1961, the Hospital District has relied on its original 5.597 mill levy to tackle all of its facility and operational needs. The District has been frugal with its tax dollars, strategically investing in projects that benefit the communities that it serves. Major projects completed over the last several years, which were paid for with reserves (saved over many years), include the new Battlement Mesa clinic, the three-story medical office building in Rifle, and a small expansion to the original hospital building, creating two additional surgery suites and a small infusion/chemotherapy space.

**The oil and gas industry pays 85 percent of local property taxes.**

The estimated monthly tax impact of the proposed \$89.4 million, 20-year bond measure is \$2.83 per \$100,000 of a home's actual value. About 53 percent of the bond proceeds would go toward construction of the new care center and 47 percent toward the hospital expansion. The Hospital District believes this is a fair and reasonable request given the positive impact the bond measure will have on the health and well-being of our community and local economy, including saving 86 existing full-time jobs and adding an estimated 200 jobs in the future.

**Why now? Why is this urgent?**

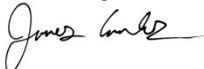
If we do nothing, or voters turn down the proposed bond measure, a planned systematic closure of our local care center will be implemented. This would result in the loss of about 86 full-time jobs and the diversion of patients to facilities outside our service area. And with a lack of inpatient beds at the hospital, patients will continue to be diverted to facilities outside our community. Unfortunately, this will only get worse as our population continues to grow.

**This is your care center and your hospital. You have the final word.**

The Hospital District is conducting a Telephone Town Hall Meeting on May 23 at 7:00 pm. The toll-free number for the meeting is (888) 409-5380. Everyone is welcome to call in. The District is also hosting an **Open Forum** on May 25, from 6:00-7:30 pm, in the Grand River Conference Center (501 Airport Rd., Rifle, CO). We also encourage you to participate in a Public Opinion Survey that will be mailed to your home within in the next month.

Thank you for taking time to learn more about this important proposal.

Sincerely,



Jim Coombs  
Chief Executive Officer