

Assisted living addition will provide new options for Moundridge residents

Memorial Home of Moundridge, Kan., has been serving the needs of area residents in its current skilled nursing care facility since 1958. Satisfaction ratings have always been high for the care received at the home, but focus groups of stakeholders and core constituency groups formed to strategically plan for the future recommended a change in the home's housing options. While the home's amenities might be satisfactory for the baby boomer generation's parents, baby boomers -- and those younger -- were looking for something else, according to Memorial Home Administrator Jim Huxman. They wanted more space.

The master plan for the future, which evolved from those focus groups, includes a 12-unit assisted living wing, remodeling of the nurse's station area of the existing building; addition of a new maintenance building, and future remodeling of the current assisted living wing into administrative offices. Bringing the plan to fruition is the design build team of Fuqua Construction and architect Tom P. Montgomery of Gossen Livingston Architecture of Wichita.

PROJECT PROFILE Memorial Home

Owner:	Memorial Home Inc.	Square footage:	12,250
Location:	Moundridge, Kansas	Design Build Team:	Fuqua Construction & Tom P. Montgomery, Gossen Livingston Architecture
Completed:	Projected, Spring 2009		
Project Scope:	Addition, renovation		
Project Type:	Nurses Station, Assisted Living		



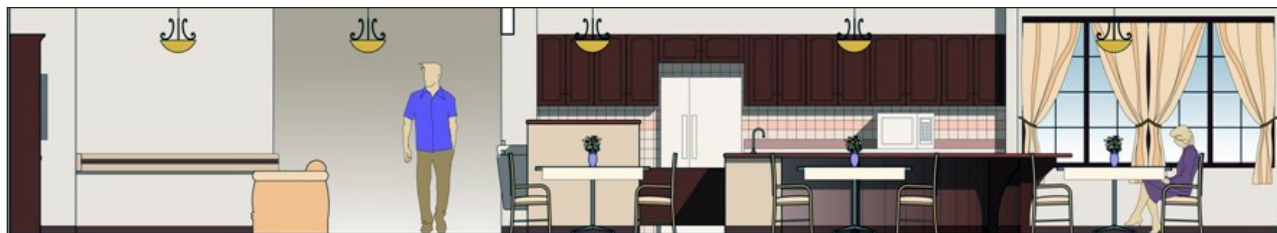
planned assisted living units will provide an attractive bridge between the independent living units on the Memorial Home campus and the skilled nursing care units. They will replace existing assisted living units that had been converted from health care rooms in the original building.

The new assisted living units will replace existing assisted living units -- which are 150-square foot rooms with a private bath -- with a 700-square foot unit. Each assisted living suite will include a living area with kitchenette, a bedroom, bath with walk-in shower, and a walk-in closet. The increased space will not only allow couples to easily share the units, they also will allow a more comfortable place to entertain family and friends, Huxman said.

The decision to gut and remodel the traditional nurses station also reflects the trend in nursing homes to a more social, resident-centered model. The area, which is nearing completion, will have the feel of a commons area or living room,

rather than a hospital nurses' station.

Fuqua Construction was hired as the general



The remodeled nurses' station transforms a clinical space into a living area for residents and their families. The comfortable gathering space also serves as an efficient nursing station for the care facility.

The campus currently has 74 health care beds, 19 congregate independent living apartments and 53 independent housing units, which are either six-plexes or duplexes. The

contractor on the project after the board of directors heard presentations from several contractors, Huxman said. Fuqua's

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reputation in the community as a quality builder – his company had been involved with building Eden Mennonite Church and other area facilities – was a significant factor in hiring him for the project.

“The community was very familiar with the work Fuqua and Doerksen Construction had done in rebuilding the Eden Mennonite Church,” Huxman said. “But, that was only part of it. We were also impressed with (Fuqua’s) values. Max is sincere, shares our values and principles. We are an independent, faith-based organization and Fuqua Construction meshes well with that.”

Huxman has been impressed with how the project is going to this point. The work is nearing completion on the remodel of the nursing station and ground breaking on the assisted living wing is scheduled to begin in the near future. Even with all the mess involved with gutting and remodeling a significant area of public space, he has found the construction crews to be very considerate of residents and staff, minimizing the disruption as much as is possible.

“We have not heard one word from residents that (the crew) isn’t considerate and kind. They are most sensitive in every way. At this particular point the work has gone very well,” Huxman said.

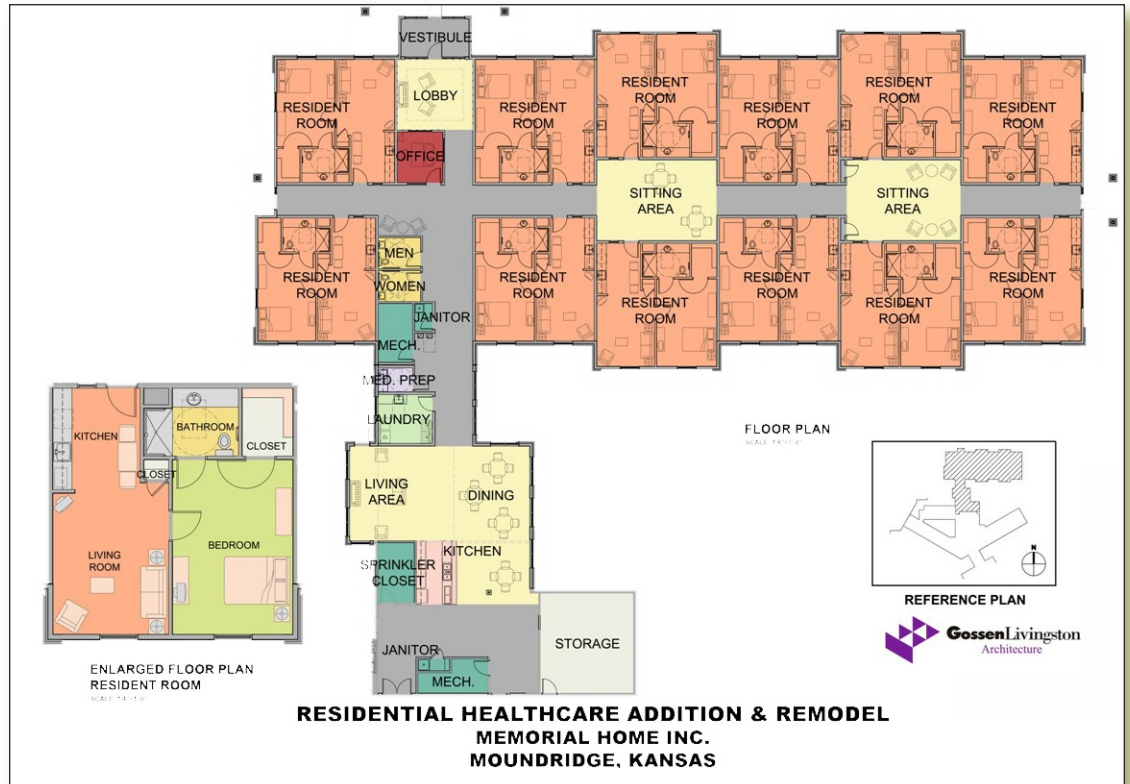
Huxman is also very pleased with the decision to use the design build approach to the project rather than the bid process. Fuqua has become the contact person on the project for everyone involved from the home’s administration, to the subcontractors and architect, to the various regulatory agencies involved in licensing the facility.

“Because we are so highly regulated, people need to be apprised of what needs to be done next in the process. Max has been very accessible and knowledgeable. He has kept me from having to take on a lot of the calls myself, which is worth a lot,” Huxman said. “The ease of communication has been great because I don’t have to go to multiple individuals to have questions answered.” He added that he also was pleased to learn from the various state inspectors that they knew Fuqua and that they spoke positively of his work from their past experiences with Fuqua Construction.

It has also been evident from the remodeling work in the long-term care and continuing care unit that Fuqua’s crew is aware of regulatory agency requirements and environmental issues as well, he said.

“There’s not a lot of dust and dirt. They are doing wonderful work,” Huxman said.

While the current volatile market in construction materi-



als has forced some adjustments to the project to stay within budget, project architect Tom Montgomery believes that the design build model provides an opportunity for the client to get the most for their money. With the design build team approach, it is easier to learn early in the process where costs are going, keeping surprises at a minimum and allowing adjustments to be made throughout the project. Construction tends to move faster and more efficiently because of the central coordination of the team’s subcontractors, he added.

“I like working with Max. His team is great and mitigates issues that come up quickly. He provides a seamless process between the contractor and the architect. Max is very straightforward and honest in projecting costs. His personality works well with clients and he’s a team player. He knows everyone’s role in the process...and works very hard to keep everyone on task,” Montgomery said.

With the right team – one that’s put together, not forced together – the whole process becomes more seamless, Montgomery said. “This was a difficult project with the remodel and he has kept everything going for the owner. I would work with Max again. He’s a great guy and a great company.”

Written by Cindy Baldwin, Baldwin Creative Services