

https://www.santafenewmexican.com/news/local_news/nonprofit-plans-to-expand-addiction-recovery-services-in-new-building/article_9c612db8-d00b-11ee-a211-of4f16fc118e.html

Nonprofit plans to expand addiction recovery services in new building

By Maya Hilty mhilty@sfnewmexican.com

Feb 22, 2024



Esperanza Gallegos, left, and Stephannie Acevedo, residential services associates at Santa Fe Recovery Center, count medication at the beginning of their shifts Wednesday at King Hall at the midtown campus. The center aims to have a \$7.1 million facility for men recovering from substance use and addiction up and running by November.

Gabriela Campos/The New Mexican

Using government funds, a Santa Fe nonprofit plans to expand its addiction recovery services this year.

The Santa Fe Recovery Center aims to have a new facility for men recovering from substance use and addiction up and running by November. The renovated building will replace one at Santa Fe's midtown campus, where the nonprofit's lease ends Nov. 1.

"It's for the benefit of the county," recovery center spokeswoman Kourtney Muñoz said.

"I mean, there's an extreme need, obviously, in Santa Fe County for these services," she added. "I think every treatment center will say that."

Capital outlay will fund the roughly \$7.1 million project: Between 2019 and 2023, state lawmakers allocated almost \$7.3 million to Santa Fe County for the recovery center to expand substance use disorder services.

The city has long planned to redevelop its midtown campus, which spurred the move, but the recovery center had been looking for a new space for the residential men's program anyway, Muñoz said.

The center has a waiting list of about three weeks for its residential services. The majority of clients are on Medicaid and many are homeless, she said.



King Hall at the midtown campus is being used by the Santa Fe Recovery Center. The nonprofit's lease ends Nov. 1, and officials hope a new \$7.1 million facility is ready by then.

Gabriela Campos/The New Mexican

The facility at midtown holds a 30-day men's residential program with 48 beds and a 26-bed extended men's residential program. The extended program essentially provides a "step down" from services, where clients have more freedom to work or attend school while continuing to receive case management, therapy and counseling, Muñoz said.

The new building at 1931 Warner Ave., near St. Michael's Drive and Fifth Street, will house the men's 30-day residential program and increase its capacity by 20%, or six beds. The recovery center bought the property in December 2021.

Meanwhile, the center is still "looking into a couple of options" on where to relocate its extended men's program, Muñoz said. The nonprofit's other facilities in Santa Fe County include a women's and children's program off of Lucia Lane, a detox center on Galisteo Street, an administration building near the intersection of Cerrillos Road and Airport Road and five sober living houses.



Shelleta Harris, a case manager at Santa Fe Recovery Center, checks on a client Wednesday at King Hall at the midtown campus.

Gabriela Campos/The New Mexican

The recovery center has been working with Santa Fe County on a proposed expansion of its services since 2019 and originally envisioned more beds at Warner Avenue. However, increased post-pandemic construction costs, among other factors, forced the center to propose a “scaled-down renovation,” Eric Sanchez, the recovery center’s director of general services, told county commissioners in a January presentation.

Leaders of the nonprofit were “shocked” by high bids for the renovation, which will cost \$290 per square foot, said the center’s chief prevention and recovery officer, Barry Ore.

The scaled-down renovation is expected to come in just under budget, leaders of the nonprofit said.



Esperanza Gallegos, right, and Stephannie Acevedo, residential services associates at Santa Fe Recovery Center, count medication Wednesday at the beginning of their shifts at King Hall at the midtown campus.

Gabriela Campos/The New Mexican

In the 2024 legislative session that ended last week, lawmakers allocated another \$1.1 million “to purchase land and buildings for” and construct a Santa Fe Recovery Center facility, but that \$1.1 million will likely be spent on a different project, Muñoz said.

Santa Fe County intends to use some of the capital outlay to eventually buy the Warner Avenue building from the recovery center, which could then lease the space by providing services in lieu of rent, County Manager Greg Shaffer said in January.

“This is ultimately going to be our facility; you’re going to operate it,” Commissioner Justin Greene said after the January presentation.

“This is a critical piece of infrastructure for our community services,” he added.



James Correa, a supervisor at Santa Fe Recovery Center, gives a tour Wednesday of King Hall at the midtown campus. Gabriela Campos/The New Mexican

Santa Fe County does not currently fund the center’s men’s residential program but does own the buildings out of which the nonprofit runs its detox facility and women’s and children’s program.

When multiple commissioners called the timeline for the recovery center’s move ambitious, Sanchez said it’s doable but added the nonprofit hopes Santa Fe will extend the midtown lease if challenges arise.

Rich Brown, the city’s director of community and economic development, wrote in an email the city would consider a “very short-term” lease extension but views it as a last resort because of “impending and delayed infrastructure redevelopment work that needs to be done in the parcel.”

Maya Hilty

Reporter