

From the Albuquerque Business First:

<https://www.bizjournals.com/albuquerque/news/2021/04/07/gibson-medical-center-sold-abq.html>

City of Albuquerque finalizes purchase of Gibson Medical Center to serve as gateway housing for homeless people

Apr 7, 2021, 5:08am MDT

Albuquerque Mayor Tim Keller announced the city's largest capital investment Tuesday to address homelessness.

The city announced it closed on a \$15 million purchase of the 570,000-square-foot Gibson Medical Center to make a dent in finding gateway housing for more than 5,000 homeless people in Albuquerque. Part of the center will provide shelter, food, water and safety to homeless people in need.

"This challenge is huge. And we know this challenge has gotten way worse during the pandemic," Keller said. "For us, this is about actually doing something. Not just talking about it, not just discussing it, not just harping about the details. This is about action.

"This is never meant to be permanent. It's meant to be a gateway to services that can then lead to people enabling and changing their lives."



DANIELLE SILVA/CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE

Albuquerque Mayor Tim Keller joined other city, county and state officials on Tuesday to announce the city finalized its purchase of Gibson Medical Center. The 570,000-square-foot property will be converted to a gateway housing facility for the city's homeless population.

Keller said Tuesday's announcement comes full circle for him, as he ran on a pledge to address homelessness during his mayoral campaign in 2017. Keller also said the center can be used for pilot programs to further address homelessness. He added that the city helps over 1,000 people in need across facilities but still needs another 500 beds on any given night.

The city's plan to buy the Gibson Medical Center was announced in December.

The bulk of the funding will come from city funds, which amounts to \$13.5 million of the \$15 million price tag. Another \$1 million is provided by Bernalillo County. Additional support for the project comes from state capital outlay allocations — including \$500,000 from State Sen. Katy Duhigg, according to a news release.

Local businesses such as Bank of Albuquerque, French Funerals and Cremations, New Mexico Mutual, PNM Resources and Presbyterian Healthcare Service also contributed to the purchase, according to a news release.

Keller said \$500,000 will be dedicated to renovating the facility, which is in southeast Albuquerque.

The city looked at other locations near Coronado Park and areas near the University of New Mexico but ultimately chose Gibson Medical Center because the project wouldn't require new construction and the center currently offers behavioral health programs on-site.

Business First reported last April that Albuquerque-based Weil Construction Inc. partnered with the Albuquerque District of the Army Corps of Engineers for emergency construction at the old Lovelace Hospital at Gibson Medical Center to treat Covid-19 patients. The state of New Mexico had been leasing portions of Gibson Medical Center to treat Covid-19 patients, according to a December news release from the city.

Ron Davis

Reporter

Albuquerque Business First

