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Byron Health Center looks to move

Could relocate from Lima Road to Lake Avenue

DAVE GONG | The Journal Gazette

Byron Health Center might soon move to a new location on Lake Avenue from its current location at 1202 Lima Road.

Allen County Commissioner Nelson Peters confirmed Tuesday that county and Byron officials have been in discussions “for some time now” about the possibility of a move.

The health center has been looking for a new location, Peters said, and appears to have found one near Lake and Beacon Street on Fort Wayne's northeast side.

Such a move would free up more than 130 acres of county-owned land for future use, Peters said. He estimated that it would take about two years to get the site cleaned up and ready for sale.

“We are working with a developer to help us better understand the value of that property and how it could be purposed,” Peters said. “I suspect there will be some kind of mixed-use development that might include some commercial as well as residential.”

Peters said the north side's growth makes the area attractive for potential developers.

Byron's move could also have an indirect effect on Fort Wayne's riverfront development efforts. City officials have been interested in buying the existing Allen County Community Corrections building on Superior Street as part of the development plan.

But moving that facility, Peters said, depends on how much profit the county makes when it sells its Lima Road property.

"Folks have asked us to clear out the Community Corrections site and we are more than willing to do that, but we don't really have the cash to do it," Peters said.

He indicated that initial estimates have determined that relocating the Community Corrections building would cost \$3.8 million to \$4.2 million.

However, because the program is growing so quickly, there's a need to expand Community Corrections' operations, Peters said, that meaning potentially higher costs than original estimates indicated.

"Community Corrections is busting at the seam. They're growing in a big way," Peters said.

"So what that means is any rebuild we do for them will certainly exceed what the original project called for just to relocate that building."

A message left for Byron Health Center officials seeking comment was not immediately returned.

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