



This artist's concept of the Great Basin Child Advocacy Center comes from architect Catherine Wines' R6studios.

# County OKs construction bid

**Child Advocacy Center to cost \$3.35 million**

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ELKO — A Great Basin Child Advocacy Center could be under construction soon on the site of the former Elko Police Department building now that a

construction contract has been awarded to American Southwest Electric.

The Las Vegas-based company had the lowest bid of nearly \$3.35 million, compared with nearly \$4.85 million from Ormaza Construction of Elko and \$5.09 million from Salt Lake City-based MGM Construction.

Elko County Commissioners

accepted the lowest bid on March 2 based on the recommendation of county staff.

"We were very pleased they (the bids) came in at what they did," said Elko County District Attorney Tyler Ingram, who has described the center as a "one-stop shop" for child victims of sexual or physical abuse. "The whole goal with this is to put all

the services under one roof."

The Great Basin Child Advocacy Center nonprofit organization has raised \$6.1 million for the facility, including for furnishings, equipment and fixtures that are in addition to the construction contract. Ingram said on March 3 that "almost

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## Construction

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all the money is non-taxpayer dollars."

He said the center had built in a cushion to their expected cost of construction because of supply chain problems and the rapidly changing costs of building materials.

According to the contract to be signed by American Southwest Electric and expected before the end of this month, the company will have 275 consecutive calendar days to complete the project from the date of the notice to proceed, Ingram said.

The nearly 10,000-square-foot facility will be built on land that the City of Elko donated across from the Elko Municipal Swimming Pool on College Drive.

Elko County will own the building, maintain the land and building, and cover utilities. The advocacy center will be under the DA's office.

The previous building had been used by the Church of Latter-day Saints before becoming the police department. It was torn down in 2017.

Great Basin Child Advocacy Center will still receive grants as a nonprofit, said Ingram, who has been a force behind the effort to build the center that can also be used by neighboring counties, including Eureka, White Pine and Lander.

"They can use the services at no cost," Ingram said, but the center may ask the other counties to provide funds "to keep the facility going."

The William N. Pennington Foundation has approved a \$5.8 million grant for the center but could reduce the grant

amount based on the price of the contract to be awarded to American Southwest Electric, he said.

The foundation will pay 50% at the start of construction, 25% at completion and the final 25% when the certificate of occupancy is issued.

The grant also is for the furniture, fixtures and equipment, and plans call for the building to have three interview rooms, three observation rooms, two mental health counseling rooms and two medical examination rooms.

While the Pennington grant is the largest, the City of Elko donated \$60,000 in addition to the land, and Elko County donated \$60,000. Eureka County donated \$100,000, and donations also came in from various companies and individuals.

Ingram said the center

also received \$30,000 in an Elko County Realtors fundraiser, and the nonprofit organization hopes to continue receiving donations for the operation of the center, which will have a fund-raising branch.

Elko County Commissioners created a special fund to receive money from the county, grants and donations for the children's center.

Great Basin Child Advocacy Center has been providing services for abused children as a nonprofit team of professionals organized to respond to child sexual and physical abuse, but without a facility focused on the children.

The team consists of prosecutors, law enforcement officers, medical professionals and mental health professionals, and Ingram said they have been working "entirely off of grant money."