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FEATURED

Walls down, work up

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Jul 26, 2023

Old Hampshire Memorial Hospital sees two wings of the building down



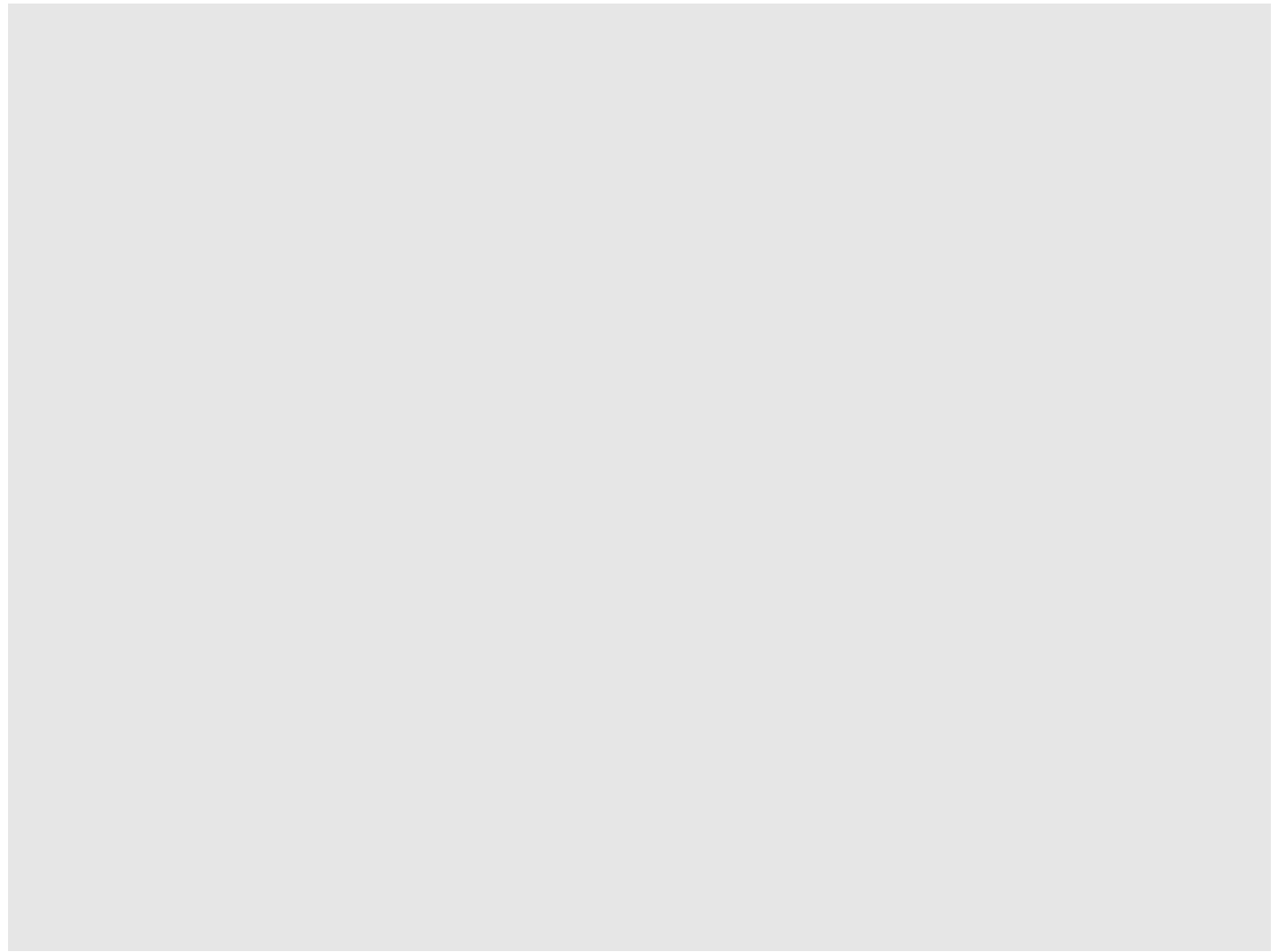
ROMNEY — Dirt continues to move, and the old Hampshire Memorial Hospital walls are quickly coming down after three years of multiple setback.

The demolition work, contracted with Reclaim Co. based out of Fairmont, began tearing down walls on July 12, and work is expected to be finished by October.



The project is currently finishing its third phase of removing asbestos-containing material (ACM) and loading out debris from two wings of the hospital, leaving the right wing and the fourth and final phase: the front face of the building. Once the work is finalized, the site will be transferred to the Hampshire County Board of Education, who will trade off their properties on School Street.

The process has not been an easy one, as the money is federally and state-funded. Expenses are sent to the Hampshire County Development Authority (HCDA), which is then reviewed by the board, and it has to go through a total of 11 different departments before final approval is made and the contractor is paid.



The good news is that progress is steady, said HCDA Director J.T. Hott. He admitted that the government job is not going as quickly as he'd like, especially compared to the jobs he took charge of in the private sector.

Another piece of good news is that the HCDA is working closely with the state to expedite the payment process to keep the project moving fast. Thrasher Project Engineer Patricia Escoriza works with different all entities to streamline the process,

Time is vital, as the Hampshire County school board wants to start working on the site and storing equipment in preparation to build the new elementary school, which will eventually replace the current Romney Elementary School. Hott reported that Escoriza would be willing to coordinate that work with more details from the School Board.

As of Friday afternoon, Hott said the work is about 67 percent completed. Work continues daily at the old Hampshire Memorial Hospital, with work expected to be finished by the end of October.