

## **Toby Keith Foundation to build hotel for pediatric cancer patients**

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OKLAHOMA CITY – The Toby Keith Foundation hopes to break ground this spring on a \$10 million hotel for pediatric cancer patients undergoing treatment at the University of Oklahoma Medical Center and their families.

Construction on the 25,000-square-foot OK Kids Korral near NE Eighth Street and N. Lincoln Boulevard is slated to take about 15 months. So far, the foundation has raised about \$2 million for the project over the past year, Toby Keith Foundation Executive Director Juliet Nees-Bright said.

“Basically, it’s going to be a home away from home for children with cancer who are here receiving treatment,” Nees-Bright said.

The hotel will include 12 overnight suites that can accommodate up to five people, as well as five daytime suites for families that are only visiting the hospital for a day.

About 78 percent of the children undergoing treatment for pediatric cancers in Oklahoma City live outside the Oklahoma City area, Nees-Bright said.

The Toby Keith Foundation also plans to provide counseling and other services to families of children with cancer at the Kids Korral, she said.

The Oklahoma City Planning Commission and Urban Renewal Authority are both scheduled to consider plans for the Kids Korral project this week.

The Kids Korral will be built on land that is under the Oklahoma City Urban Renewal Authority’s purview through a redevelopment agreement with the Presbyterian Health Foundation Research Park, said Cathy O’Connor, executive director of the Oklahoma City Urban Renewal Authority.

“The project will be a nice addition to the Health Sciences Center and is part of very generous program by the Toby Keith Foundation,” O’Connor said.