Borough Looks to Slew of Projects Ahead

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The face of Borough Hill is changing. The new library is slated to open its doors this fall and on Monday the parking lot in front of the Kodiak High School was fenced off to allow for equipment storage in preparation for the renovation and construction project.

Borough Manager Bud Cassidy said project is moving forward, but folks shouldn’t expect to see too many changes just yet.

“There’s still a lot of the paperwork, documents to be signed, those kinds of things," he said. "But certainly the fencing off the area where materials will be stored is important. And that’s what you really see right now is all the fencing that’s been put up. But you won’t see a whole lot going on for some time.”

Earlier this month the Assembly approved a $62 million construction budget for the project. The total project cost is $80.4 million, but as Kodiak Island Borough Assemblyman Aaron Griffin said, that’s not an accurate view of what the borough will actually be paying.

“For a community our size that’s a huge amount of money," Griffin said. "But you have to remember that we’re getting a 70 percent reimbursement from the state on this."

He said the borough isn’t even really paying the 30 percent of that bill that’s left. About $4 million in bond money from other projects was rolled into the high school cost and $7.5 million will come from legislative grants.

When you take all of those into account, the actual cost of the high school renovation and construction project is $21

million, which will be paid for over the next two decades.

That isn’t the only project on the borough’s agenda these days. Work has already started on the new Long Term Care Facility. That project comes with a price tag of about $21 million, but again, Griffin said that money won’t come directly from the borough.

“That’s going to be paid for out of the Medicaid funds. It’s paid for by the people staying there, the beds pay for it through the state Medicaid and Medicare," he said.

Another item on the borough’s project list is the landfill expansion. That project will run about $25 million, but funding from the state capitol budget should help with that cost as well. The capitol budget was passed during the legislative session that ended in April and now awaits the governor’s signature.