

Flower Mound welcomes hospital

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When Bob Rhuedasil was mayor of Flower Mound during the town's early days, having a hospital in town was the last thing on his mind.

Back then, the population of Flower Mound was about 150.

Friday, atop the same land that Rhuedasil used to raise goats and cattle, the community celebrated the opening of Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital Flower Mound, located at 4400 Long Prairie Road.

"I never thought I'd see it," said Rhuedasil, who served as the town's mayor from 1961-68. "I knew someday we'd have the medical development that's across the street, but I never dreamed of us having a hospital."

Of course, in the 1960s, the population didn't drive the need for one, nor did the town have enough money for such an endeavor. But now with a population that's close to eclipsing 63,000, plus future completion of the FM 2499 expansion that will further connect Flower Mound to various Denton County communities, the need has arrived.

"This is a dream come true, and it's been in the making for 20 years," said Rick Carter, president of Texas Health Flower Mound.

The full-service hospital includes 103 beds with 250 physicians on staff with a range of specialties.

In addition to general medicine, the clinical service areas offered include surgery, orthopedics, women's and infant's health, cardiology and diagnostic imaging.

Hospital officials boast a variety of aspects to the facility, such as its goal of working closely with its physicians. The hospital is a joint venture between Texas Health Resources and local physicians through a partnership developed by Texas Health Partners. The medical staff will include more than 125 physicians representing more than 25 specialties.

Other components that highlight the hospital include the exterior that features walking trails and an emphasis on landscaping.

"Our vision was to create a place where patients and their families could be strengthened and comforted by the beauty of the trees and the other natural features to create an environment that cares for the whole body, for the whole individual, body, mind and spirit," said Steve Hanson, Texas Health Resources' senior executive vice president, system growth and integration. "Today that idea has become a reality because it was backed by power and purpose."

Also, the design and construction incorporated many "green technology" efforts. The building products for the facility included 20 percent recycled content or were produced locally. Interior products such as paint, carpet and coatings were chosen with a low volatile organic compound (VOC) content.

Then there is the economic impact. Officials say that the hospital will bring in 500 jobs. Others said that being the first completed component of the River Walk at Central Park, the hospital will anchor the 158-acre development.

While the future of many parts of the development are uncertain, the hospital was complete on time.

"We had 90 days of rain or snow to deal with, yet we were still on time and under budget," said Chuck Elsey, chairman of the hospital's governing board. "This doesn't happen without the leadership of this community, and we had that across the board."

The hospital was set to officially open to the public Friday night.

Paraphrasing retired college basketball coach John Wooden, Carter said, "Make every day a masterpiece, and think about the future that you will create and endure it. This is it, folks."