

NCTC to open extension campus at Parker Square

From staff reports

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North Central Texas College will expand its service to Denton County this spring with the opening of a new extension campus at Parker Square in Flower Mound.

Now serving nearly 6,000 students at its Corinth campus, open since 1999, NCTC had already been offering credit courses at various temporary Denton County locations since the early 1970s.

The Parker Square location is intended to better meet the needs of residents of the southern portion of the county, a region that Dr. Eddie Hadlock, NCTC president, said has been underserved by NCTC up to now.

“And, frankly, our Corinth campus is rapidly nearing a state of being maxed out,” said Hadlock. “It’s likely that over the next year or so we’ll be doing some kind of expansion there as well, not only to increase capacity but also to improve services.

“Whether this new campus location will impact enrollment at Corinth in any significant way remains to be seen, but we don’t expect it to because of the different population base we’ll be serving in the Flower Mound area.”

He added that NCTC continues to experience significant growth system-wide, with fall enrollments larger at its main campus in Gainesville, at its extension campus in Bowie and at its new Graham branch campus in Young County.

The college’s governing board, in a recently called special meeting, formally approved the 10-year lease agreement with a group of private investors on a 32,000-square-foot, building at Parker Square. The contract includes an option to buy at the end of the term.

Formal closing is expected to be complete by no later than October 1, according to Dr. Lee Ann Nutt, vice president of instruction. It was she who first identified the property as a potential campus location, and she was a key player in the lease negotiations.

“The entire two-story, stand-alone structure is essentially just a shell right now,” said Roy Culberson, dean of the NCTC Corinth campus who is currently acting as coordinator of the Parker Square project, “so we are really under the gun to get the finish-out completed, get all the computer network cabling installed and get all the classroom and office furnishings and equipment in place in time to start classes in January.”

On Oct. 15, NCTC will open a temporary office in Suite 908 in Parker Square to provide prospective students with enrollment information, academic advising, assistance with financial aid applications and even computer stations for submitting admission applications and registering for classes online.

Culberson said announcement of a telephone number and a Parker Square campus website will be made soon.

When finish-out work on the building is completed, it will have 10 conventional classrooms, lecture hall, two computer labs, science lab, library/learning resources center, bookstore, student lounge/study areas and faculty/staff offices.

Initially, about 118 individual course sections will be offered, primarily in traditional university transfer subjects like English, math, government, history and biology.

“But we’ll be adding a few technical courses to the curriculum as well,” Nutt said, “beginning probably

with some computer classes.”

“The brief delay in offering a full range of courses, including two-year associate degree programs, is due to a requirement that approval be given by our accrediting agency for complete degree tracks at a new campus location, but we don’t foresee any problems with that.”

Nutt commented that one of the most appealing things about Parker Square is its strategic, easily accessible location on a main thoroughfare — Cross Timbers Road (FM 1171), which becomes W. Main Street in Lewisville.

She pointed out that it is also a central geographic hub of the locations of Flower Mound, Marcus and Lewisville high schools.

Opening of the new NCTC extension campus is expected to significantly improve the economic vitality of the Parker Square complex, which has for some time been struggling with vacancies due to a shortage of daytime customer traffic to its retail shops, restaurants and other businesses.

With NCTC daytime enrollment expected eventually to reach 1,000 students and beyond, this should change dramatically.

“The location is ideal for us, and this makes it a win-win for both NCTC and the Parker Square area business community,” Nutt said.

She pointed out, however, that although expanding service to this particular part of Denton County is of prime importance, the Parker Square extension campus is part of a broader ongoing plan to enhance and expand NCTC’s presence throughout the county.

Along with Montague County and Cooke County, as well as the Graham ISD in Young County, Denton County is part of the geographic “service area” that NCTC is mandated by state statute (Senate Bill 397, 1995) to serve.

For information about the new NCTC extension campus project at Parker Square in Flower Mound, contact Roy Culberson at 940-498-6236, email: rculberson@nctc.edu.