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Methodist plans hospital on west side / Completion of 192-bed facility expected in 2010

By LYNN COOK
 Staff

The Methodist Hospital System will spend \$300 million to build a 192-bed hospital in west Houston, hospital executives announced Friday.

The hospital, with an emergency room, open-heart surgery capability and cancer treatment areas, will be on the north side of the Katy Freeway just west of Barker Cypress, Methodist president and CEO Ron Giroto said in a statement.

Construction is scheduled to start early next year, with completion by 2010.

The Methodist hospital site is directly next door to a 55-acre tract where construction will begin on Texas Children's Hospital West in 2008. That \$220 million pediatric project is expected to be complete in 2010 as well.

Methodist is also building a new imaging center on the Katy Freeway near Voss, which is to open by next fall.

"The greater Katy area is expected to grow almost 20 percent over the next five years, and the medical needs of the community will grow with it," Katy Mayor Don Elder Jr. said in a written statement with the Methodist announcement.

According to a study by CDS Market Research, the population between West Loop 610 and Katy is expected to increase by 269,000 by 2025.

Other hospitals already operating in the area include Memorial Hermann's facility at the Katy Freeway and Grand Parkway and Christus St. Catherine Hospital south of the Katy Freeway on Fry Road.

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Methodist is in the midst of a \$1.5 billion expansion program, with projects under way in the Texas Medical Center as well as Sugar Land and the Willowbrook area.

Methodist Sugar Land Hospital will grow to 200 beds in a \$150 million expansion scheduled for completion at the end of 2008.

A \$250 million expansion at Methodist's Willowbrook hospital will bring the facility's bed count to 250, with room for 100 more. Another \$9.6 million is being spent to add a cancer treatment center to that site.

These Methodist projects are under way or planned in the Medical Center:

A research institute adjacent to the hospital's main building. The project, to include laboratory space, imaging and operating rooms dedicated to research, is expected to be complete at the beginning of 2010.

A 1.5 million-square-foot outpatient center next to Smith Tower between Fannin and Main streets. When that 24-story project is complete in March 2010, it will include outpatient surgery and cancer treatment facilities.

A new patient tower at Bertner Avenue and John Freeman Boulevard. Plans are incomplete, but Methodist executives are considering adding 300 to 700 beds.

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