

Mixed Use –Medical Village at St. Bernard Parish , Louisiana

ADDRESS: ; Chalmette, LA 70043 AREA: Chalmette

DESCRIPTION:

This project reaches across multiple sectors and addresses multiple needs of the community. This project is comprehensive in scope and vision. The completion of the medical village project will not only provide emergency, behavioral and specialty medical services, but will also provide housing, retail, and space for other social services. Existing medical services cannot support the current population or any additional population returning to St. Bernard Parish. Adequate medical services must be provided in order to encourage residents to return, and it must be advanced enough to attract new residents. The Medical Village will provide a central location for businesses, residents and other medically-related offices to relocate. This project replaces a hospital that was built on low-lying ground with a mixed-use medical campus that is centrally located and will be near to the majority of the returning residents.

ALL medical facilities within a 30 mile radius of St. Bernard Parish were destroyed by hurricanes Katrina and Rita. This includes the private 100 bed hospital, clinics, doctor's offices, mental health facilities and pharmacies. The only regional medical facility available is located in Jefferson parish which is more than thirty minutes away. The Jefferson parish facility is currently operating with a three to nine hour wait time for emergency patients. Ambulance service for transporting patients is overwhelmed and requires extreme measures due to the length of the trip.

The following is a list of the medical facilities available to residents prior to hurricane Katrina:

- 240 hospital beds with a hospital staff of 150 physicians (70 very active)
- 30 physician offices
- 20 geriatric inpatient beds
- 44 physicians residing in parish (23 w/primary care specialties)
- 3 full-time private behavioral health practitioners in office settings
- 2 Medicaid rehab programs
- Mental Health Center
- 12 pharmacies in parish
- 24 dental clinics or practices
- St Bernard Public Health Unit

After the hurricane the majority of all care for the parish is provided from a 22,000 sq. ft. urgent care facility (triple trailer) with extremely limited diagnostic equipment. This facility is located in the Wal-Mart parking lot. Medical professionals at the urgent care facility are seeing 100 patients each day without adequate equipment (x-ray, sonogram, lab, etc.). The urgent care facility has been addressing the immediate needs of the parish to this point; however, increased needs are expected in the areas of work site injuries and car accidents, as well as drug overdoses and suicides in the post-disaster situation that the parish is facing. Chronic care is also of rising importance, as the long-term needs of patients cannot be met without adequate equipment, supplies and medical personnel, all of which are at a shortage in the parish presently. For example, after the storm there are:

- no dental clinics/practices,
- three pharmacies,
- no physician offices,
- 4 physicians,
- 7 nurses and 3 nurse assistants (currently volunteering/providing limited services),
- limited mental health services provided at Wal-Mart site (most mental health patients are being diverted to treatment at mental health clinics in Orleans parish).

The existing 100 bed hospital had over 17 feet of water as well as severe wind damage. Due to the extensive damage to the building and potential for future damage this facility will not be reconstructed. This was a privately-owned facility, therefore is not receiving any government assistance to rebuild nor is assistance being provided by FEMA for intermediate facilities.

The Medical Village project is highly supported by the community. It is important to the residents of St. Bernard that there be a minimum of general medical facilities in the parish before they can return. The

Citizens Recovery Committee (CRC) has formed a Public Health subcommittee, comprised of local physicians and other concerned residents, and has quickly begun to develop this project. The Public Health Subcommittee, in conjunction with local physicians, prepared a "St. Bernard Parish Hurricane Recovery Plan", from which this project derives. This plan has been presented to the Louisiana Recovery Authority (LRA) Public Health and Healthcare Subcommittee. Already, a grant to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has been submitted to support medical activities.

This project is being planned and implemented cooperatively with the public sector, the private sector, and the non-profit sector, because many people realize how fundamental this project is to rebuilding the community. One of the unique aspects of this project is that it is a partnership between the Meraux Foundation, the Franciscan Missionaries (PNP), St. Bernard Parish and Louisiana State University to create more than simply a new hospital with regional service capabilities (both physical and mental health). It also serves as a medical "village", incorporating administrative offices for the sheriff and office of emergency services; a centralized location for private non profit agencies, community meetings and health clubs; senior housing, transitional housing and housing for parish residents; medical offices, and retail businesses (including linkage to the Wal-Mart site). Much of the retail will be arranged along an outdoor pedestrian mall parallel to Judge Perez Drive.

This 140-acre tract of land (which is being donated by the Meraux Foundation, a private organization) will become a primary focal point for parish reconstruction through the proximity of compatible uses and careful design. It will be built in a manner that will benefit all citizens of the parish. Construction of all facilities will follow the recently-adopted International Building Code and will be compliant with the Advisory Base Flood Elevations (ABFE) that are issued by FEMA.

The project proponents realize that this is a large and complex project. In order to make the project feasible, the project has been broken down into separate, yet connected, phases. Phasing the project maximizes opportunities for flexible design and adjustment as market conditions may change.

The project includes four phases, with detailed cost breakdowns for each phase estimated.

Phase I – \$3,929,679

Phase I is anticipated to occur over a 3 year period.

In Phase I, gap funding for the urgent care facility, which is temporarily located across the street from the Medical Village site, is being sought. This facility is a 22,000 sq. ft. converted barracks building containing: 12 medical exam rooms, 1 trauma room, 1 major medical room, 7 urgency beds and 5 observation/treatment cubicles. Services include: emergency services, radiological services, short term care, minor surgeries, outpatient, lab and dental facilities, physician offices and specialty services. Space will also be included for dental, behavior health, education, outreach and referral services as the complex evolves. This facility will need to be in operation as the new medical facilities are developed.

Also as part of Phase I, the project will establish a mobile health unit to focus on children's services and outpatient mental health to serve peripheral areas that do not have their own facility or do not have the need for a permanent facility.

Phase II –

\$24,000,000 (site development 140 acres) \$85,000,000 (hospital 150,000 sq.ft.) \$22,000,000 (elderly care facility 90,000 sq. ft)

Construction of a hospital facility. This will be a 50 bed facility (25 for medical patients and 25 for mental health patients). Key features of this facility include:

- emergency care
- elderly care facilities
- teaching capacity related to Allied Health programs at Nunez and Delgado Colleges and Medical programs at Louisiana State University.

Also as part of Phase II, the project will construct a combined social services center to provide space for entities such as the Red Cross and United Way.

Phase III –

By the time Phase III is ready to being, the most critical medical facilities will have been built. This phase, the housing, retail and office space will be constructed.

Key elements of the Medical Village Development include:

- Construct a professional office building and ancillary medical support facilities. 60,000 sq. ft \$16,000,000
- Housing development for both senior citizens and residents displaced by the storms. 74 housing units, 4 condominiums \$25,000,000
- Retail shopping area for pharmacy and other retail services related to the medical Village. 2 buildings. 65,000 sq. ft. \$7,000,000
- Construct the first block of an outdoor pedestrian shopping mall to provide increased shopping alternatives in accordance with the principals developed by Waggoner and Ball and Duany Plater-Zyberg.

Phase IV –

Costs and timeline for this phase are unknown. This is the final phase of development and while these services would be welcomed in the parish, they are lower in priority than the other three phases. The first three phases are fundamental to recovery in St. Bernard Parish. Key elements of Phase IV are listed below.

Expand the hospital facility/complex to include a:

- surgery center
- physical therapy/health club
- heart center
- cancer treatment center

COMMUNITY WIDE IMPACT:

The Medical Village has not just a community wide impact, but a regional impact. It will provide services to people throughout the parish and in surrounding parishes. It will also provide a critical facility to attract new residents and businesses, spurring the repopulation and economic recovery of the parish