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## STATE

# TMH breaks ground on new campus in area with 'incredible boom in population'



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Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare is expanding its footprint west of the capital city with a new medical campus in partnership with Florida State University and The St. Joe. Company.

A groundbreaking ceremony took place last week for the FSU Health-Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare Medical Campus in Panama City Beach.

TMH President and CEO Mark O'Bryant said the construction kickoff comes as the hospital celebrates its 75th anniversary this year. The expansion is directly tied toward rapid population growth and a growing need for healthcare services.

"We have grown from a small, city-owned hospital into a comprehensive health care system. As the population in our region increases, TMH has identified a substantial need to expand health care services," O'Bryant said. "Over the past seven and a half decades, we've built a reputation for excellent, compassionate and local care, and we are proud to now offer our services to the Panama City Beach communities."

The healthcare campus will be built on an 87-acre parcel near the intersection of State Highway 79 and Philip Griffitts Sr. Parkway. It will include an 80,000-square-foot medical office building. It will house the TMH Physician Partners - Primary Care, Tallahassee Memorial Urgent Care Center, an ambulatory surgery center and cardiology and orthopedic services.

It's slated to be complete by 2024 and will be near the Latitude Margaritaville Watersound community, a residential development built by The St. Joe Company for residents 55 years and older.

Jorge Gonzalez, president and CEO of The St. Joe Company, said the groundbreaking represented an important "step forward for our community."

“This medical campus, backed by the expertise of Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare and Florida State University, is a crucial element for supporting the health and well-being of residents and visitors in every stage of life,” Gonzalez said, in a statement. “It also has the potential to create synergistic opportunities between research, education, and clinical delivery, to enhance the quality of life throughout the region and beyond.”

Plans also call for a 100-bed hospital with an emergency center and other inpatient services, including surgery, cardiology procedures and imaging, to be complete by the end of 2027.

According to TMH, the partnership will create opportunities for FSU researchers who are focused on aging and digital health, along with residency programs and clinical rotations for FSU medical students.

The partnership comes as the university has been expanding its health-based research. Students at FSU's College of Medicine will be able to gain hands-on experience with the physician assistant training program.

FSU President Richard McCullough said the university already has a Panama City campus. The new partnership allows the school to serve more residents and play an “important role in a vibrant health care delivery system.”

“This area is experiencing an incredible boom in population and the possibilities — and needs — have never been greater,” he said. “There are tremendous opportunities for collaboration on research, education and clinical health care across the region — and I’m excited that it begins right here with this medical campus.”

The university also plans to break ground on the FSU Health Tallahassee Center on the TMH campus later this year with the support of a \$125 million appropriation from the Florida Legislature.

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