

MEDICAL CENTER OF THE AMERICAS

El Paso, Texas... The Health Capital for the Population of Tomorrow by 2015

Executive Summary
October 2006

The Paso Del Norte Region today is in an opportune position to blossom due to its location, demography and leadership. It must, however, capitalize on the favorable circumstance in place right now in order to fulfill its potential for future growth and prosperity. One of the most exciting and promising avenues for achieving its potential is by the private and public support and guidance of the development of the Medical Center of the Americas (MCA).

What is the MCA?

The MCA is a campus of facilities in El Paso dedicated to health research, health delivery, health education and economic development of the El Paso community, the Paso del Norte Region and the Americas. The vision of the MCA is to position the Paso del Norte region as the premier center of health delivery, education and research for the population of tomorrow. This campus will prove to be both a powerful economic engine for the Region as well as an essential mechanism for improving access to quality health care for the population of tomorrow.

Why El Paso?

El Paso is in a unique position to be the prime location for the MCA. The population demographic change of the Region is forecast to be that of our entire nation. Understanding and addressing the health needs of the Hispanic and other ethnic populations in El Paso and in the rest of the US is of paramount importance to the overall healthcare system in our nation. The MCA is the optimal solution to begin the work essential to accomplishing this task.

If El Paso were to take the lead in researching and addressing health issues particular to Hispanics, we would create a laboratory of innovation that would inform the health care industry throughout the nation as the Hispanic population continues to grow and thrive. This laboratory would create jobs, wealth and opportunity for El Pasoans. With vision, leadership and resources, El Paso will be the Capital of Hispanic Health. Our city has the opportunity to lead the nation with the first medical center to focus on education, research and care focused on the opportunities and challenges unique to Hispanics in the United States.

Benefits: Economic Development and Increased Quality of Health Care

El Paso will reap many short and long term benefits with the successful development of the MCA. By formalizing the MCA into a planned campus of facilities the efficiency and effectiveness of healthcare delivery and research in El Paso will be increased. The number of providers, especially specialists, in El Paso will increase to the levels needed in the region. In addition, the rate of economic growth (i.e., new jobs, increased wages and new business opportunities) in El Paso from healthcare related services and goods will increase at a much faster rate than if left to grow in an unplanned manner. El Paso will also become a source of information for the rest of the nation as it prepares for the population of tomorrow.

MCA Today

The MCA in El Paso has already begun to physically take form. Although a final Master Plan for the MCA has not yet been developed, eight (8) institutions already exist in the area currently planned for the MCA. These institutions include: R.E. Thomason Hospital; Texas Tech Health Science Center (TTUHSC); Psychiatric Center; Office of the Medical Examiner and Forensic Laboratory; Texas Department of Human Services; West Texas Regional Poison Center; Maxine L. Silva Magnet High School of Health Care Professions; and El Paso City / County Health Department Administration.

Other potential partners that are not currently in the physical location of the existing MCA plan, but may be joined through other mechanisms (e.g., technology, transportation) include: UTEP College of Health Sciences (School of Nursing) & Rehabilitation Sciences; El Paso Community College School of Nursing; VA Health Care System (VAHCS); University of Houston School of Public Health; Universidad Autónoma "Benito Juárez" de Oaxaca, Facultad de Medicina; and New Mexico State University in Las Cruces, New Mexico.

Investments in the MCA

Financial investments have already been secured for the following projects and expansions of existing MCA tenants, including: (a) TTUHSC is opening a \$38.5 million research tower. Ground has been broken to build a classroom facility for the medical school with an initial capital investment of \$40 million. The Texas legislature is finalizing \$38.5 million for start up operating costs. (b) R.E. Thomason Hospital is planning a \$120 million renovation and modernization project.

Other potential investment opportunities exist for the MCA campus to fulfill the MCA goals, which include but are not limited to: stand alone Children's Hospital; nursing school; regional super-laboratory for multi-agency use; medical research "incubator" for use by local and visiting researchers to fulfill existing contracts and grants; and hotels, restaurants and other retail establishments that support the MCA healthcare facilities.

Institutional Partners

Developing the MCA and realizing its full potential will require coordinated and determined action from many individuals and institutions. Various resources and skills will also be required including sufficient funding, land and economic development expertise, healthcare policy experience, and relationship building power. The following institutions have been identified as playing critical roles in the development of the MCA:

- MCA Foundation Board – keeper of the vision; master land planner
- Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center – fundamental building block
- El Paso County Hospital District (R. E. Thomason Hospital) – fundamental building block
- Border Health Institute – program planner and coordinator
- City of El Paso – provide funding for the master plan; coordinate master planning efforts

MCA Foundation

The MCA Foundation was reconstituted in January 2005. Committees were created for Funding, Master Plan Request for Proposals, and Executive Director Search. Officers were elected in accordance with the Foundation's by-laws.

The following individuals comprise the MCA:

City Council Representative for District 3 (MCA location): J. Alexandro Lozano

Interim Executive Director: Emma W. Schwartz

Board Officers

- Woody Hunt, Hunt Building Corp. – President of the MCA Board
- Rick Francis, Bank of the West – Vice President of the MCA Board
- Ann Pauli, Paso Del Norte Health Foundation – Secretary
- Edward Escudero, Petro Stopping Centers – Treasurer

Board Members

- Rafael Adame, Diversified Technical Services, Inc.
- Richard Adauto, UTEP
- Chris Balsiger, ISO
- Robert Brown, Desert Eagle Distributing
- Maria Elena Flood
- Hector Rico
- Robert Skov, Skov Farms
- J.O. Stewart, Jr., Stewart Holdings
- Katherine Updike, Building Solutions

Summary of Actions Taken to Date

- January 2006: The MCA Foundation Board of Directors was reconstituted.
- April 2006: The Health Care Cabinet moved to have a contact established in the Planning Commission to coordinate with the MCA, and to have the city provide \$250,000 in funding for the MCA feasibility study.
- September 2006: An Executive Director for the MCA was hired.
- August – October 2006: Proposals for the MCA Master Plan project were received from a select group of respondents who were provided the RFP for the project. Interviews were held with a “short list” of master planning firms.
- September 2006 – present: MCA has been coordinating with the institutional partners and city representatives to gain support for and create a unified vision for the MCA.

Next Steps

- Determine the appropriate city Planning Commission contact to coordinate with the MCA.
- Obtain approval and funding for the Master Planning project from the city of El Paso.
- Raise funds to complete the master planning process.
- Award the contract to a Master Planning firm.
- Gain input and support from the neighborhood groups, community and institutional partners.
- Execute the Master Planning Process.
- Begin development of the MCA.

MCA Contact

For more information regarding the MCA, please contact Emma W. Schwartz, MCA Interim Executive Director, at 915.269.2569 or emma@w-hc.com.