



DANIEL

Big Plans for U.S. 280 Hospital in Birmingham

Daniel Corp has offices, hotels, in works to complement facility

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by Michael Tomberlin

In two years, Trinity Medical Center could be celebrating the opening of its new hospital on the former HealthSouth Corp. campus off U.S. 280.

Daniel Corp., a development ally of Trinity, aims to make its own splash -- opening two new nearby medical office buildings, a retail center and a full-service hotel at the same time as the hospital.

Charlie Tickle, chief executive of Daniel, expects the plans to be realized after a state regulatory board last week voted to allow Trinity to relocate its hospital from Montclair Road to the unfinished former HealthSouth hospital.

“It was certainly a defining day on this campus,” Tickle said in an interview. “The right decision was rendered and now we can move forward with the needed jobs and investment this project will bring.”

That move forward may have to wait a bit longer.

Brookwood Medical Center, which has opposed the move, is expected to mount a legal challenge. Tickle predicts that process will have run its course within six months, resulting in a Trinity victory and clearing the path for the developments to move forward.

Allowing a construction timetable of 16 to 18 months, the elements in the initial phase of a \$750 million transformation of Cahaba Center at Grandview, as Daniel calls the property it acquired from HealthSouth, should be complete by September 2012.

In the interim, Tickle said planning and engineering work will be done so that once all roadblocks are removed, the contractors can start their work.

At that point, Brentwood, Tenn.-based Community Health System, Trinity’s parent company, will spend \$280 million to purchase and complete the 13-story hospital and construct an attached parking deck.

While that is taking place, Daniel will be working on projects meant to enhance the hospital. They include:

- Up to 500,000 square feet of medical office space in two buildings with their own parking deck next to the hospital’s.
- A 250-room, full-service hotel attached to the conference center.

- A retail center with shops and restaurants to cater to hospital visitors and others on the site near U.S. 280 behind the current office park sign.

Daniel will add infrastructure and roadwork for the projects.

Following phases will add at least one more large office building with a parking deck and a smaller, 150-room, limited-service hotel.

The hospital is driving the initial development while the future projects will be driven by market demand, Tickle said.

In the end, the campus should be home to around 6,000 workers and investment should top \$750 million.

For those who already cringe at U.S. 280 traffic, the thought of 6,000 more people spilling out on the highway during rush hour is horrifying.

But Tickle said there will be aspects of the development's design meant to mitigate those concerns. Also, the majority of the hospital workers will be on different shift times than typical rush-hour drivers on U.S. 280, he said.

"This is going to be a different work force and will really bring a 24-7 feel to this part of U.S. 280," Tickle said. "It could change the dynamic of this part of town."

Tickle said Daniel supports an elevated toll road that has been proposed by Gov. Bob Riley and others to address the traffic problems on U.S. 280.

Daniel's vision for the complex follows its purchase of the 103 acre-site from HealthSouth three years ago. The Cahaba Center at Grandview property includes the HealthSouth headquarters, now a multi-tenant office building, and the former Richard M. Scrushy Conference Center, now called the Cahaba Grand Conference Center, and the unfinished hospital.

Daniel's vision has been in limbo as Trinity went through a two-year fight to earn approval to move its hospital from Montclair. The state Certificate of Need Review Board on Wednesday unanimously agreed with Administrative Law Judge James Hampton's ruling last month that recommended approval of the plan.

Over the years, Daniel has handled many big projects in the area, including Ross Bridge in Hoover and Greystone on U.S. 280, as well as office developments in the Birmingham area. It is constructing the \$127 million outlet mall in Leeds called the Shops of Grand River.