

# Shands Jacksonville advances with plans for Northside hospital

It plans for a better economy, health needs in the area.

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Read more at Jacksonville.com: <http://jacksonville.com/news/health-and-fitness/2011-08-08/story/shands-jacksonville-advances-plans-northside-hospital#ixzz1UkfcDHNO>

By [David Bauerlein](#)

Shands Jacksonville is moving forward with plans to build a 110-bed hospital on the Northside after seeing signs of economic healing in the area's residential housing market.

Shands announced Monday it will ask the Florida Agency for Health Care Administration to find there is a need for the hospital, based on population growth in northern Jacksonville and southern Nassau County.

Shands [unveiled plans in August 2007 for a medical campus](#) on land it owns along Duval Road east of Interstate 95, near the River City Marketplace mall. Shands pushed back construction after the recession stymied subdivision development, but homebuilding has picked up again, said Jim Burkhart, president and CEO of Shands Jacksonville.

He said if the state grants a certificate of need this year, Shands could open the new hospital around 2015.

"There ought to be a lot of economic turnaround by then," he said, "for all of our sakes."

The hospital would be in a \$125 million Shands Jacksonville North campus that would also have a medical office building.

According to Shands, the area served by the hospital has about 145,000 residents and has posted a 22 percent jump in population the past decade, faster than the rest of Duval and Nassau counties. When the hospital is up and running, it will generate 350 jobs, Shands said.

Shands is helping to pay for a recently started road project that will widen two-lane Duval Road into a four-lane, landscaped boulevard. Ramco-Gershenson, which developed River City Marketplace, and Signature Land also are paying for the road construction.

Dick Berry, a Northside resident whose Eden Group promotes economic development in the area, said residents will be relieved Shands is taking the next step.

"I'm just happy that anything is moving forward these days, and I'm very thankful these guys came together to build the road," he said.

The state Agency for Health Care Administration reviews plans for hospitals to guard against overbuilding of hospitals that result in duplication of services. Before making an initial decision in December, the agency will field public comments on whether the hospital fills a need.

Shands would build its medical campus in two stages.

The first would be a medical office building with offices for University of Florida faculty, primary care physicians and specialty care physicians. It also would house diagnostic, ambulatory and urgent care services, and outpatient surgery. Shands does not need a certificate of need to break ground on the medical building, which could be open by the end of 2013.

The next phase would be a "full-service community hospital" with all private rooms for patients, an emergency department, obstetrics, general surgery and related medical services, Shands said. The medical campus will offer many of the services Shands Jacksonville has at its downtown campus, Burkhart said, which is about 11 miles away.

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