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El Paso seeks to become healthcare hub

Hammes Company has been selected as part of a team that will lead initial efforts to realize a long-term vision to develop a ‘world class,’ 140-acre biomedical campus

EL PASO, Texas, Feb. 2, 2011 – When local officials discuss plans to develop a “world class” biomedical campus, they envision a healthcare destination that will become their region’s version of the famed Texas Medical Center in Houston – as well as a technology park that could someday rival Northern California’s Silicon Valley.

Those are lofty goals, to be sure. But El Paso officials say they have the vision – and the team – that can lay the groundwork to achieve them.

The Medical Center of the Americas (MCA) Foundation recently selected Hammes Company as part of a team that will spearhead the creation of a strategic and business plan for the proposed biomedical research park in El Paso. The facility would be a step toward implementing MCA’s 50-year master plan for a 140-acre, integrated campus dedicated to biomedical education, research, healthcare delivery and technology commercialization.

In addition to Brookfield, Wis.-based Hammes Company, the nation’s largest healthcare real estate developer, the MCA project team includes E-Cubed Ventures, LLC, a technology venture development and strategy firm headquartered in San Francisco, as well as Chicago-based Perkins+Will Inc., one of the nation’s oldest and largest architecture firms specializing in healthcare and the life sciences.

The team will lead a three-phase planning project that will develop a vision, strategy and business plan for the research park. The eight-month effort is scheduled to begin with a Feb. 10 launch meeting.

The MCA’s goal is to better serve the healthcare needs of the Hispanic, bi-national and military population of the Paso del Norte region, which includes El Paso, far West Texas, southern New Mexico and El Paso’s sister city of Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, México. It is also home to the Fort Bliss U.S. Army installation, White Sands Missile Range and several other military installations. The region’s combined population of 2.6 million makes it the largest metropolitan area on the U.S.-Mexico border and one of the largest border metroplexes in the world, according to data compiled by the MCA.

The initial request for proposals (RFP), issued by the MCA in May, called for strategic and business planning services for only the first of three planned 80,000 square foot buildings to be developed on about 10 acres in the research park. Concept plans for Biomedical Research Incubator and Technology Commercialization Building I



Conceptual drawing of Biomedical Research and Technology Commercialization Building I

Please click on the image to link to a high-resolution version.

included offices, laboratories, support space, meeting/conference/auditorium facilities, technology incubator/accelerator space, medical office suites for clinical trials and flex space that can be built out for specific tenants' needs.

But the project team believed that the planning effort should be broader – looking at the research park as a whole. So they proactively presented the MCA with a proposal that not only directly addressed the RFP, but went far beyond that, presenting a phased approach that would provide a broader economic and technological framework for success.

“We were very favorably impressed by the team’s initiative in going above and beyond the basic RFP requirements,” says Emma Schwartz, President of the MCA. “That – combined with the fact that E-Cubed Ventures, Perkins+Will and Hammes Company are all proven leaders in their fields – convinced us that their capabilities and ‘big picture’ approach would give us our best opportunity for success.”

“By defining the strategy for the research and technology commercialization first, and then the building’s development requirements, we ensure that the facility will effectively serve its mission as the anchor for the MCA research park,” says James Gollub, Managing Director of E-Cubed Ventures. “Our team’s approach to ensure the success of the Research Incubator and Technology Commercialization Building is distinctive because it not only directly addresses the MCA RFP, but also goes further, building on our integrated approach and experiences in prior research parks and technology buildings.”

“We are elated to have the opportunity to work with Jim Gollub, E-Cubed Ventures, Perkins+Will and the MCA on this pioneering project,” says Kevin Anderson, Director of Medical Office Building Development at Hammes Company. “This engagement will enable us to use our expertise in the areas of healthcare real estate consulting and strategic planning in a way that will ultimately benefit of the entire Paso del Norte region.”

The first phase of the MCA planning project will concentrate on the development of a vision for the research park. The team will analyze the economic framework and business case for the park, and will involve MCA leadership, as well as other city and regional stakeholders, in a collaborative process intended to produce a shared vision that includes an outline of the goals and development process.

The second phase of the planning project will focus on developing strategies for achieving the goals of enabling and accelerating biomedical enterprise formation, expansion and attraction to the technology center building and research park, by leveraging university, medical school and surrounding biomedical innovation sources.

The third and final phase of the project will culminate in the delivery of the business plan that will include specific recommendations regarding the building program and design, as well as development, operational and funding/financing plans, and financial modeling and pro formas.

The planning process is scheduled to be completed by this fall.

About the Medical Center of the Americas (MCA)

The MCA is a campus of facilities in El Paso dedicated to health research, service delivery and education in the Paso del Norte region and the Americas. The MCA will encompass a collection of facilities and services emanating from the present location of the Paul L. Foster School of Medicine - Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) El Paso and the University Medical Center of El Paso in support of a unified concept of medical center research and support structures. For more information, please visit www.MCAmericas.org.

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About E-Cubed Ventures

E-Cubed Ventures is a technology venture development and strategy consulting firm. We bring innovations to market by serving inventors, entrepreneurs and institutions, such as universities, tech centers and research parks. We bring markets to innovations by providing corporations and investors with a portfolio of demand-driven opportunities. Our goal is to optimize *every* stage of the innovation pipeline by applying our 3D™ system. This creates new paths from discovery through development to deployment, maximizing technology capture and economic returns. E-Cubed Ventures is headquartered in San Francisco, Ca. For more information, please visit at www.ecubedventures.com.

About Hammes Company

Hammes Company is a single source of market-based and financially sound healthcare solutions. The full-service consulting firm is at the forefront of providing strategic planning, facility development, project management and implementation, and real estate acquisition and advisory services to hospitals, healthcare systems, and major physician groups. The company has been ranked as one of the nation's top developers of healthcare facilities for 11 consecutive years by *Modern Healthcare* magazine. Hammes Company is headquartered in Brookfield, Wis. and provides services through a network of regional offices strategically located across the country. For more information, please visit www.hammesco.com.

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