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 **University Health System**
Bexar County Hospital District
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Bexar County Selects Design Teams For \$899M in Hospital Improvements

SAN ANTONIO In May, the Bexar County Hospital District announced commissions – totaling \$899 million – for two large medical facilities following a competition involving highly detailed presentations by seven design teams. The projects are planned as part of a capital improvements program for the hospital district to expand existing facilities at two San Antonio locations, University Hospital in the South Texas Medical Center and University Health Center–Downtown. Both are scheduled to be completed in 2012.

The Dallas office of Perkins + Will was selected to lead the team for University Hospital. With a budget of \$778 million, the work at University Hospital is the larger of the two projects. The team also includes Garza/Bomberger and Associates, RVK Architects, and Richard Sanchez Architects, all of San Antonio. Improvements to the downtown campus will be lead by the Dallas office of RTKL. The team for that smaller project will include two San Antonio firms, Overland Partners Architects and Paul Anthony + Associates.

Drawing the attention and participation of many firms from across the nation, the selection process was unorthodox in several ways. First, although the hospital district took pains to call the process a “design challenge” rather than a competition, presentations included refined design proposals from each firm. Second, as stated in the hospital district’s Request For Qualifications, all schemes presented became the property of the University Health System (UHS), the governmental entity under which the county operates its medical facilities. UHS paid stipends, either \$100,000 for the larger project and \$50,000 for the downtown project, to the teams that failed to land the commissions. According to Mark Webb, UHS vice president of facilities development and project management, the decision to secure ownership of all the designs will allow UHS to mix elements from any of the submittals. “We wanted to have the ability to use pieces and parts to make the best project possible,” Webb said recently.

UHS is the third-largest public health system in the state of Texas. University Hospital is the flagship of its operations, with about 400 beds, and serves as the lead Level I trauma center for a 22-county area of south/central Texas. UHS operates numerous other facilities, including



The commissions went to teams headed by Perkins + Will for University Hospital (top) and RTKL for University Health Center–Downtown (left). Both projects are scheduled for 2012 delivery.

University Health Center–Downtown, formerly the Robert B. Green Memorial Hospital, located just west of San Antonio’s central core.

The recently awarded commissions – the focus of the system’s Target 2012 program – will result in several improvements at both locations, including a new trauma tower at University Hospital and a new urgent care building downtown. Previously, UHS hired Jacobs as the lead program management firm and two project managers, Broaddus-Muñoz for the University Hospital and Parsons for University Health Center–Downtown. Broaddus and Associates finalized master plans for both campuses last year.

In January, University Health System began its A/E selection process by issuing separate RFQs for each of the projects, the larger being University Hospital which attracted submittals from 13 design teams. Subsequent evaluations resulted in UHS inviting five of the respondents to make presentations in May, three for University Hospital and four for the downtown project. The two teams that lost to Perkins + Will for University Hospital were led by San Francisco-based Anshen + Allen and RTKL. The three

teams that lost to RTKL for the University Health Center–Downtown were Anshen + Allen (teamed with local firms Alamo Architects, Lake/Flato Architects, O’Neill Conrad Oppelt, and Lopez Salas), Marmon Mok of San Antonio (teamed with HOK and Chesney Morales & Associates), and Page Southerland Page’s Austin office.

The process for both commissions involved evaluation teams, composed of UHS staff representing a range of its departments, that assessed the firms using set criteria. In both cases, the evaluation teams conducted site visits to the firms’ offices – to assess their use of management software, BIM, and healthcare program modeling and simulation – and a day-long conference with all the firms in attendance to discuss the intricacies of the selection process and programmatic factors specific to that particular project.

The process culminated with each of the selected firms giving four-hour presentations that included detailed models of their designs. However, according to Webb, “This was not a beauty contest. We were not picking a scheme, we were picking a team.”

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