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Shepherd's Hope breaks ground on new healthcare facility

Partnership with the West Orange Healthcare District and City of Winter Garden will increase community access to much-needed free health care services for the uninsured

WINTER GARDEN, Fla. (October 4, 2017) – City and health care leaders gathered this morning to break ground on construction of Shepherd's Hope's new West Orange Medical Clinic & Administrative Center (WOMC&AC) in Winter Garden. The facility will provide greater access to free health care services for the growing West Orange County community, including essential primary and secondary medical services, health management and education, and wellness programs.

The WOMC&AC is a collaborative partnership among Shepherd's Hope, the West Orange Healthcare District and the City of Winter Garden:

- The 10,200-square-foot facility marks a significant milestone for Shepherd's Hope, representing the first permanent location for the 20-year-old organization that also operates five other free and charitable clinics in Central Florida. Since opening its doors in 1997, Shepherd's Hope has provided free medical services to more than 237,000 patients.
- The West Orange Healthcare District has pledged a \$1 million matching grant to be used for capital facility construction. "In addition to offering free medical care, this facility will also provide greater access to healthy food, creating a holistic approach to caring for the most vulnerable members of our community," said Tracy Swanson, executive director of the West Orange Healthcare District, whose focus is on enhancing health and wellness in west Orange County. "It's in perfect alignment with our mission and we're proud to have provided the seed capital for this project."
- The City of Winter Garden is leasing Shepherd's Hope two acres of land at 455 Ninth Street. Notably, the location is just blocks away from the first Shepherd's Hope's clinic that opened in 1997 at the Westside Vocational Technical School. "Shepherd's Hope has been an effective healthcare

resource for two decades in our community, reaching those in need by providing much needed medical visits to the uninsured,” said City Manager Mike Bollhoefer. “We are pleased to work with them in bringing a permanent medical clinic and their administrative center to Winter Garden.”

Other “Founding Legacy Donors” include:

- The West Orange Health Alliance has contributed \$500,000 toward the West Orange Healthcare District’s \$1 million matching gift.
- Dr. Phillips Charities has committed a \$250,000 matching pledge toward the project.
- St. Luke’s United Methodist Church has committed \$100,000 to build out as a tenant in the new facility with a two-fold purpose. The first is to serve as a teaching kitchen to help Shepherd’s Hope patients and local residents learn how to prepare nutritious meals. Second, it will support a small farmers’ market planned for the adjacent city site by allowing vendors to use the space to prepare food products for sale. St. Luke’s church is the founding organization for Shepherd’s Hope, based on a desire of its former lead pastor, Dr. William S. Barnes, to deliver health care to the community’s most vulnerable citizens by raising critical dollars while volunteer doctors and nurses treated patients in donated spaces.

The WOMC&AC will include a 3,500-square-foot administration center, a 5,600-square-foot health center and St. Luke’s 1,100-square-foot nonprofit community kitchen.

Shepherd’s Hope provides free primary and secondary medical services to the 1-in-4 Central Floridians who are uninsured or underinsured, including children. An estimated 850,000 Floridians remain in a gray area – in the coverage “gap” in regards to insurance availability – earning too much to qualify for some programs, but not enough to afford products offered on the Healthcare.gov exchange, even with federal subsidies, because of out-of-reach deductibles and co-payments.

“It is significant in our 20th anniversary year that our new health care facility will return Shepherd’s Hope back to its roots in East Winter Garden where our first patient was treated,” said Marni Stahlman, president/CEO of Shepherd’s Hope. “Joined again in our mission, as we were then, by longtime health care partners, Florida Hospital and Orlando Health, we now welcome the West Orange Healthcare District, West Orange Health Alliance, Dr. Phillips Charities and the City of Winter Garden into our family of ‘caring people, caring for people’. United, along with our amazing volunteers, we will bring access to essential health care services that will transform the lives of those in need.”

About Shepherd’s Hope

Shepherd’s Hope is the leading voice for the uninsured and underinsured in Central Florida. Founded in 1997, the faith-based nonprofit organization provides free primary care and specialty care medical services to uninsured men, women and children from five free standing health centers in Orange and Seminole counties. In 2016, Shepherd’s Hope provided 17,128 free patient visits and medical services thanks to partnerships with 2,300 licensed medical and general volunteers, 3 community hospital systems, 100 diagnostic/surgical providers and 23 multi-faith partners. To learn more, visit ShepherdsHope.org or call (407) 876-6699.

About The West Orange Healthcare District

The West Orange Healthcare District (WOHD) is an independent special healthcare district whose mission is to enhance health and wellness in west Orange County. In just the past five years, the District has awarded nearly

\$125 million to local not-for-profits that provide healthcare services to area residents. The District was created by an Act of the 1949 Florida Legislature and is governed by a 16-member Board appointed by the Governor of Florida. Although originally designed as a taxing organization, the District no longer collects tax from the community; the last tax collected was in 2000. More information at wohd1949.org. The District is a founding champion of "Healthy West Orange," a grassroots movement to inspire west Orange County to become the healthiest community in the nation. For more information, visit www.healthywestorange.org.

About the City of Winter Garden

The City of Winter Garden is a municipal corporation with a city population of 41,606 and an employment base of 20,000 that was incorporated in 1908. Winter Garden has a Commission/Manager form of government with a Mayor and four Commissioners. The City of Winter Garden is located on the southern shore of Lake Apopka, 20 minutes west of Orlando in Orange County. It is considered one of the most desirable places to live in Central Florida because of its unique quality of life. The City of Winter Garden City Hall is located at 300 W. Plant Street, Winter Garden, FL 34787. To learn more, visit City of Winter Garden or call (407) 656-4111.

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