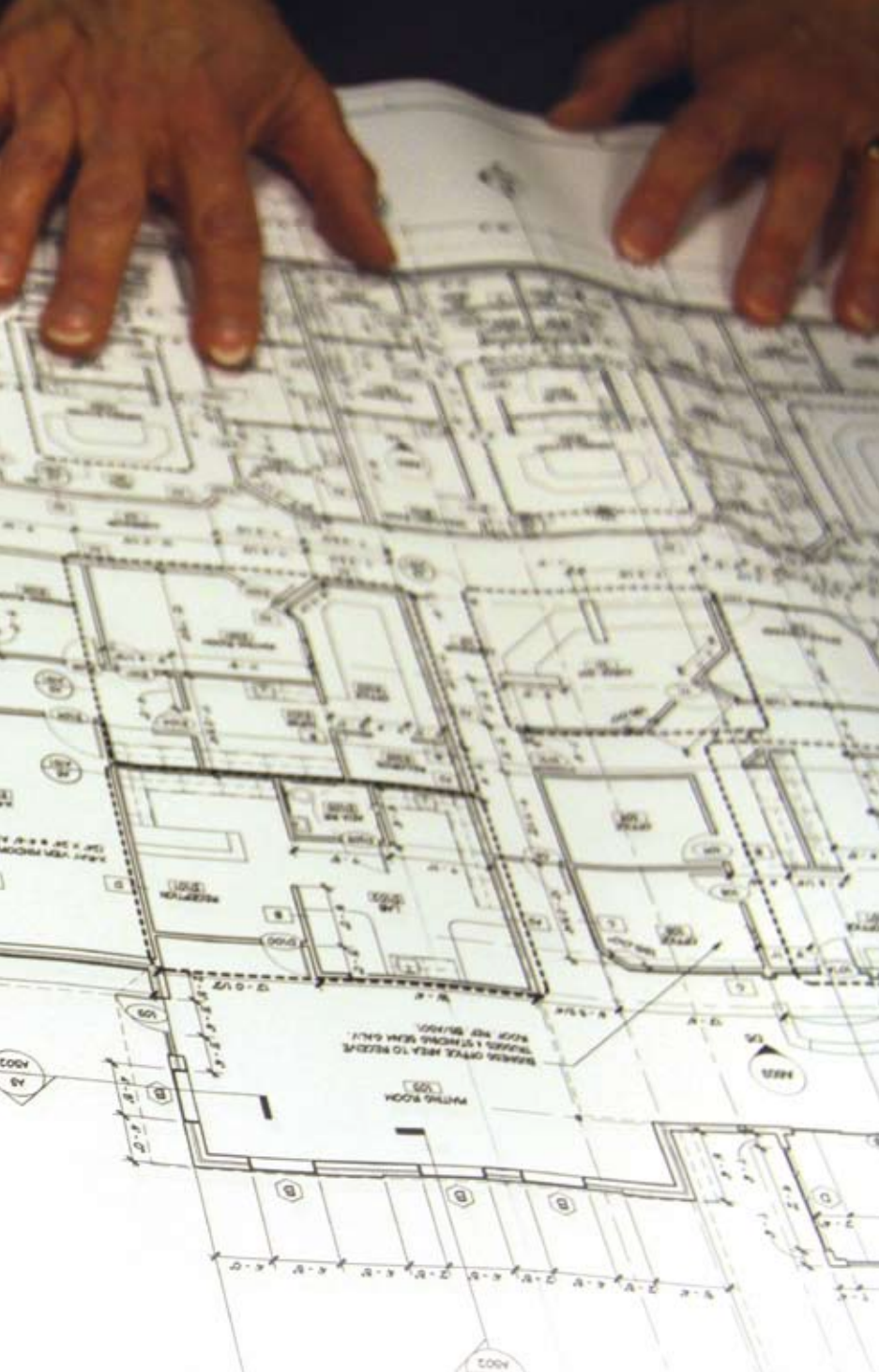


Closer^{TO} HOME

Weatherford Regional brings medical care to east Parker County

BY MARICE RICHTER | PHOTOGRAPHY BY HEIDI STOUT

The sour economy has jilted new construction, especially commercial construction, just about everywhere. But that is a little less evident in Parker County, where Weatherford Regional Medical Center is continuing to turn dirt and hoist cranes to play catch-up.



“[I]t isn’t just a matter of keeping up with the growth but catching up to it.”

*— Donnie Romine,
CEO of Weatherford
Regional Medical
Center*

Aledo/Willow Park area had grown from 13,600 in 2000 to 18,300 in 2007. By 2012, the population is projected to be 22,000.

Although Weatherford Regional is about a 10-minute drive on Interstate 20 to the west and the Fort Worth hospitals are about 25 minutes to the east, that situation wasn’t fulfilling the needs of this growing area for quick, easy access to routine and minor care.

“Convenience is certainly a big factor,” Romine says. “We identified a need, and we’re going to put a product out there that meets that need.”

The result will be Lone Star Medical Plaza, a 21,000-square-foot facility that will be a hybrid in the world of medical service. It will combine a minor-emergency-care center with physicians’ offices to treat everything from the flu during office hours to an asthma attack at night.

A major expansion of the Weatherford hospital isn’t quite finished, but the hospital already has embarked on another construction project: a minor-emergency and family-care facility in the Aledo/Willow Park area.

“Growth is a big factor in Parker County,” says Donnie Romine, CEO of Weatherford Regional Medical Center. “The growth has been going on for some time, so it isn’t just a matter of keeping up with the growth but catching up to it.”

Weatherford Regional was acquired as a subsidiary of Community Health Systems about three years ago. Soon afterward, the hospital conducted a market analysis to determine what services were lacking in the community.

The survey indicated that east Parker County was growing quickly and there weren’t many medical services available, he says.

The survey results showed that population within a five-mile radius of the