

Daily Herald

Suburban Chicago's Information Source

'Phenomenal change': How Central DuPage Hospital is reshaping downtown Winfield



A three-story medical office building is ready for patients across the street from Northwestern Medicine Central DuPage Hospital in Winfield. (*Brian Hill | Staff Photographer*)



From left, Daniel Callaghan, director of planning and construction for Northwestern Medicine Regional Medical Group, Central DuPage Hospital President Kenneth Hedley and Jen Andersson, vice president of the regional medical group, tour a new medical office building in Winfield's Town Center. *(Brian Hill | Staff Photographer)*



Jen Andersson, vice president of Northwestern Medicine Regional Medical Group, and Central DuPage Hospital President Kenneth Hedley discuss the outpatient facility opening in downtown Winfield. *(Brian Hill | Staff Photographer)*



Northwestern Medicine Central DuPage Hospital President Kenneth Hedley visits a waiting room in the new medical office building opening in downtown Winfield. *(Brian Hill | Staff Photographer)*



Katlyn Smith

Updated 1/30/2023 8:39 AM

Five years ago, a block of downtown Winfield needed an economic shot in the arm.

Two abandoned homes, an old service station and a parking lot had fallen into disrepair at Church Street and Jewell Road.

The once-blighted corner now boasts a \$38.8 million medical office building designed to anchor the redevelopment of Winfield's Town Center.

Northwestern Medicine will open the three-story building to patients today. The project marks the latest step in the transformation of a sleepy downtown area into a medical and commercial district around Northwestern Medicine Central DuPage Hospital.



Kenneth Hedley, president of Northwestern Medicine Central DuPage Hospital - Brian Hill | Staff Photographer

"This is yet another milestone in our development agreement with the village, and it proves the strategic partnership and success of that partnership," said hospital President Kenneth Hedley. "We've been working very well with the village."

The health system also has built a parking garage and amenities in Riverwalk Park since forming an agreement with the village to inject new life into Winfield's small-town downtown. Northwestern has set aside commercial and restaurant space on the ground floor of both the parking deck and the medical office building.

"We expect that there will be a lot of traffic coming in on a daily basis, and that certainly is another real big plus in terms of supporting our businesses in Town Center," Village President Carl Sorgatz said.

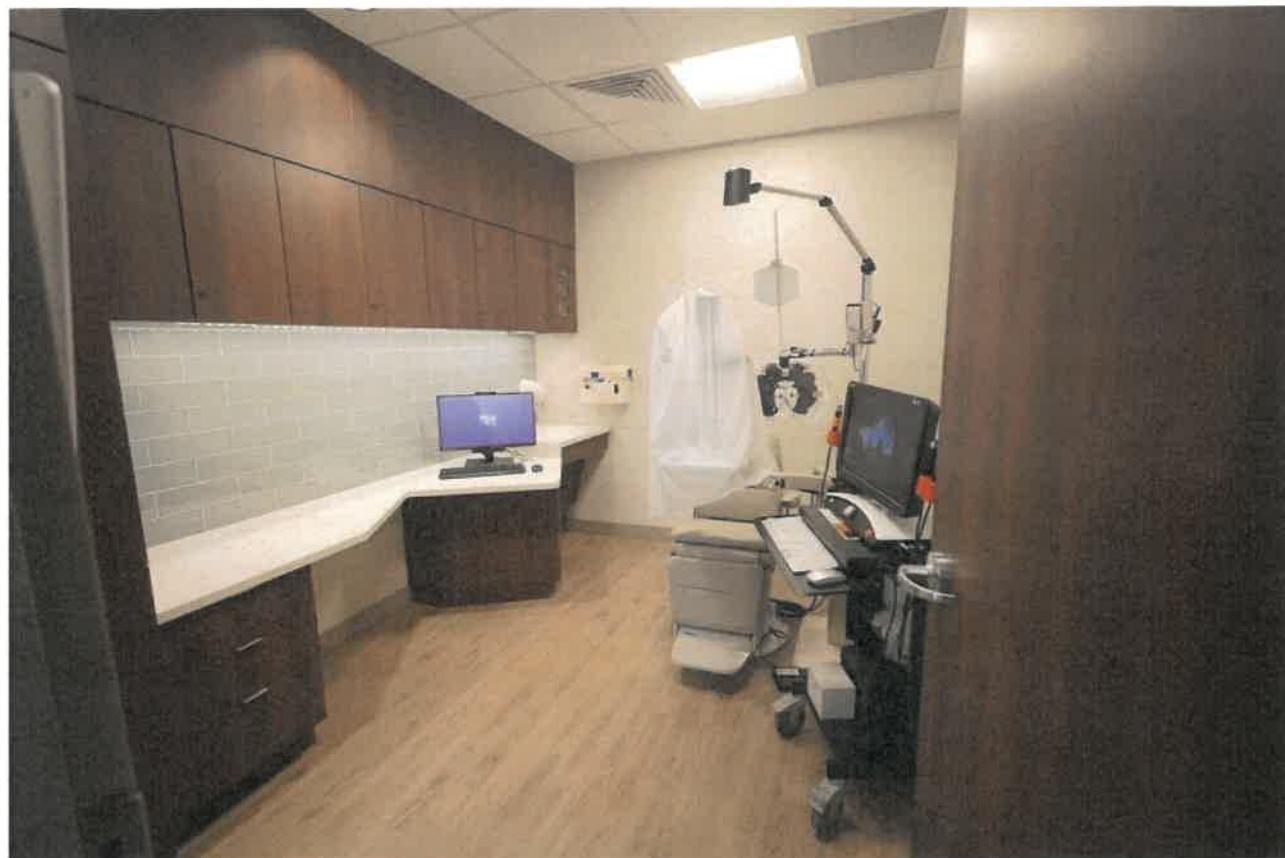
The hospital and the village publicly unveiled a Town Center revitalization plan in 2018. Village leaders wanted to spur development and increase foot traffic in a downtown that was mostly populated with mom-and-pop businesses. The plan also responds to trends in health care while meeting the demand for hospital parking and clinical space.

As the centerpiece of that effort, the striking new building has risen right across the street from the hospital. It has large walls of windows, a herringbone stone facade and a "green roof" that will be partially covered in plantings.

"The first floor will be all for retail and restaurant development, and we're certainly looking to get those spaces filled," Sorgatz said. "We're working diligently to do that and looking forward to getting some of those new spaces filled out with new tenants that will be serving our residents here in the community."

An optical store is expected to open on the first floor. Hospital officials also envision a street-level coffee shop and additional retailers.

"That's part of our plan to try to revitalize, bring vitality and energy to downtown Winfield," Hedley said.



An eye clinic in Winfield's Town Center contains 26 exam rooms, three of which are for pediatric patients. - Brian Hill | Staff Photographer

Building features

An ophthalmology clinic takes up the entire second floor of the building.

The clinic will handle a range of eye conditions: cataracts, glaucoma, macular degeneration, eyelid surgery and diabetic retinopathy.

The staff includes Dr. Michelle Andreoli, her brother Dr. Michael Andreoli and their parents, Dr. Randall Andreoli and Dr. Barbara Andreoli. They are former Wheaton Eye Clinic providers now practicing at Northwestern.

With 26 exam rooms -- three of which are for pediatric patients -- the Winfield clinic will act as a new hub for eye care. Northwestern also has a smaller satellite clinic in Naperville and plans to open another one in Geneva near Delnor Hospital.

In Winfield, eye patients will go through different stations instead of staying in a single exam room.



Jen Andersson, vice president of Northwestern Medicine Regional Medical Group. - Brian Hill | Staff Photographer

"The patient is always moving and not clogging up an exam room for an hour, waiting for staff to come to them," said Jen Andersson, vice president of Northwestern Medicine Regional Medical Group.

An allergy and immunology clinic has relocated to the third floor of the building and expects to serve about 900 patients a month. Currently, those health services are housed in Central DuPage Hospital's outpatient building.

The move frees up space within the hospital campus.

"We can actually expand other clinics where co-location in the hospital is important," Hedley said.

A urology clinic also will open on the third floor of the new outpatient facility in March.

Elsewhere

The list of downtown projects is remarkable in a suburb where municipal elections tend to focus on development issues.

Winfield Station, a five-story apartment complex, is almost fully leased, Sorgatz said.

The site that once housed John's Tavern is available for development directly west of the medical office building. The restaurant owner closed the business in 2017 after deciding to retire. Northwestern purchased the property.

To the west of the hospital, Northwestern built a four-level parking deck with ground-floor retail and restaurant space. A pedestrian bridge over Winfield Road links the structure to the hospital.

A day care center, Primrose School of Winfield, plans to open later this year on the first floor of the garage.

Northwestern also has developed portions of nearby Riverwalk Park with new paths, a band shell, a picnic shelter and a bocce court.

Sorgatz said village trustees on Thursday will discuss a proposal to create a special events commission. It would be responsible for coordinating events at the band shell and other community gatherings.

"It's just phenomenal change," Sorgatz said. "And we'd like to see that continue because we want our Town Center to be a destination."

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