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**The Valley Chronicle**  
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## News

## Two new medical centers intended to meet demand

By CHARLES HAND/*The Valley Chronicle*

Even as financial problems bring the specter of reductions in services at the San Jacinto Valley's only hospital complex, a private medical building is about to open in San Jacinto and another will be open within months.

Robert Osborne, a longtime Valley developer, said the new facilities will be able to pick up some of the slack should the hospital close or end some of its functions, though neither his Valley Medical Center nor another going up beside Valley-Wide Recreation & Park District headquarters on Esplanade Avenue will be able to provide long-term care.

Valley Medical Center, though, will have an urgent-care element at which medical emergencies can be treated, he said.

"This is a great asset for a city on the upswing," said San Jacinto Mayor Jim Ayres, who said an outpatient surgical center may also be in the medical center's future.

Osborne agreed. Planning has begun for the surgical center, he said. He expects it to open in 2009.

Already offered in the 28,000-square-foot building are rehabilitation, bone density testing, mammography, CRT, and MRI.

It also has San Jacinto's only elevator - though it has only two stories. But the imaging will be installed on the second floor, and the elevator will make it easier for those with disabilities and injuries to get upstairs and back down.

Ayres said he envisions the medical center as a partial solution to Hemet Valley Medical Center should worse come to worst.

Hospital officials say that it could close if a way is not found to improve its financial picture.

Ayres said the problems in Valley Health System have contributed to the decisions to build medical buildings in San Jacinto.

"The situation at Hemet Valley Medical Center has not been good for some time," Ayres said. "They see the writing on the wall."

That and pent-up demand, said Osborne.

"Our marketing study showed an urgent-care facility was desperately needed in this end of town," he said.

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Opening urgent care in the north end of the Valley will help draw some pressure off the hospital's emergency room as well, Osborne said.

The same marketing study showed that Kaiser Permanente patients living in the Valley had to go to Loma Linda University Hospital 45 miles away for CRT, MRI, and mammogram services, he said. He hopes to talk Kaiser into redirecting its local patients to the new medical center.

"It has the latest stuff," he said.

One of the state-of-the-art devices provides digital mammograms.

Another creates a paperless environment within the building. Records are kept on computer.

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