

The Business Journal of Phoenix - March 12, 2007  
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## Cancer treatment center proposed for west Phoenix

The Business Journal of Phoenix - March 9, 2007 by [Angela Gonzales](#) The Business Journal

Belinda Cummings, a 43-year-old city of Phoenix employee, has been traveling to Illinois for nearly three years to get chemotherapy treatments to battle breast cancer.

Frustrated with local doctors, Cummings made the trek every three weeks to receive what she considers superior treatment at Cancer Treatment Centers of America. Now she is cancer free and has to go back just every six months for checkups.

All that will change soon as Cancer Treatment Centers of America plans to build a \$75 million facility along Loop 101 in west Phoenix. Banner Estrella Medical Center is just south of the planned project.

Stephen Bonner, president and chief executive of the Schaumburg, Ill.-based network, said this will be the fourth facility in the nation, adding that he plans to open two more throughout the country.

He estimates the new facility will create 260 jobs when it opens and as many as 450 jobs within two years. By year five, Bonner estimates the hospital will have an economic impact of \$400 million.

The facility is expected to break ground in July and open about 15 months later.

The 200,000-square-foot facility will be licensed for between 30 and 40 beds, with most of the treatment being done on an outpatient basis. Recruiting for a physician staff will take place nationwide.

This isn't the only cancer hospital on the drawing board for Phoenix.

Banner Health, the state's largest hospital system, is planning to build a National Cancer Institute-designated comprehensive center, but has not yet identified a site for the facility that will have 145 to 150 beds.

The nonprofit health system will partner with the University of Arizona's cancer center, one of 39 in the nation designated by NCI as a comprehensive cancer center, earning a national and international reputation for its research and innovative patient care.

Bonner said he welcomes the competition.

"How can there be too much competition?" he said. "Competition is good for everybody."

Barry Broome, president and chief executive of the Greater Phoenix Economic Council, which helped to attract the for-profit Cancer Treatment Centers of America to Phoenix, said the two cancer facilities will complement each other.

"According to a recent report put out by Arizona State University, we go about 50 percent capacity in our health care capabilities," Broome said. "There's a lot of expansion available to hospitals."

Bonner said patients travel 500 miles to each of the three existing regional cancer centers, which together are treating about 5,000 patients. New patient growth has been in the 20 percent to 25 percent range over the past several years.

"We focus on later-stage cancer," Bonner said. "We'll be there for a lot of the patients who are told by other centers they don't have anything else they can do for them."

Taking a holistic approach to cancer treatment, oncologists work with nutritionists, naturopathic practitioners, mind-body therapists, physical therapists and spiritual supporters to treat each individual and the family.

Cummings, design project manager in the city's street transportation department, said the whole-body approach helped her heal faster.

"I was able to work full-time throughout my whole treatment," she said. "Most people get sick. I was fortunate it didn't happen. I attribute it to what they helped me with."

### FAST FACTS

Cancer Treatment Centers of America Headquarters: Schaumburg, Ill.

Philosophy: Whole-person care, where patients and oncologists work together with nutritionists, naturopathic practitioners, mind-body therapists, physical therapists and spiritual supporters to treat each individual and the family.

Hospital locations: Philadelphia, Pa.; Zion, Ill.; Tulsa, Okla.

Phoenix site: Algodón Center, a 1,000-acre master-planned business and commerce park within the Loop 101/Agua Fria Freeway business corridor.

Development cost: \$75 million

Web: [www.cancercenter.com](http://www.cancercenter.com)

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