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Gilbert Hospital is eyeing expansion in Florence

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Gilbert Hospital, which opened in February 2006, is eyeing the Florence market to open another hospital expected to employ 350 people after the first year.

David Wanger, CEO of Gilbert Hospital, said his hospital group is in escrow with **Pulte Homes** to buy 10 acres on the southwest corner of Franklin Road and Hunt Highway. The transaction represents the first phase of a planned 40-acre medical complex.

Last year, Gilbert Hospital's emergency department treated more than 51,000 patients.

Plans call for opening a 50,000-square-foot, two-story structure in Florence that will house about 20 inpatient beds, 20 emergency department rooms, two operating rooms, a full-service laboratory, blood bank, full-service pharmacy and diagnostic capabilities. It also will include two medical office buildings.

Medical physician specialties at Florence Hospital will include internal medicine/hospital services, emergency, cardiology, general surgery, gastroenterology, urology, orthopedic surgery and podiatry.

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