

THE VALLEY HOSPITAL

Enters a New Era

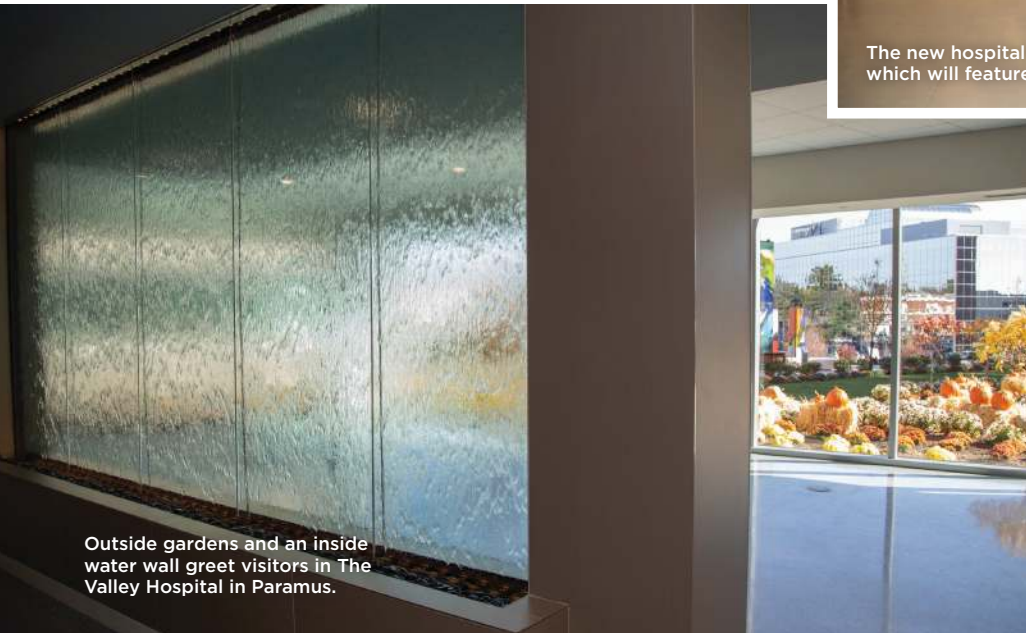
JUST DOWN THE BLOCK

BY KATHRYN SCHMIDT

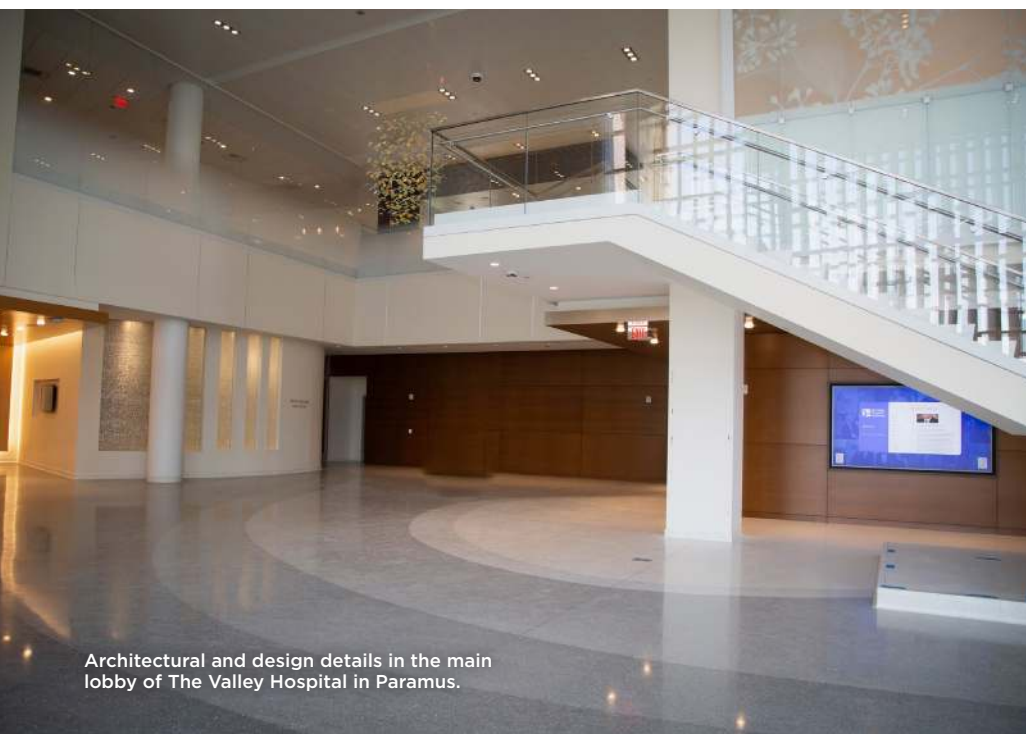
PHOTOS BY JANET JOYNER PHOTOGRAPHY



The new hospital's cafeteria which will feature a pizza oven.



Outside gardens and an inside water wall greet visitors in The Valley Hospital in Paramus.



Architectural and design details in the main lobby of The Valley Hospital in Paramus.

In 2017, The Valley Hospital made a decision to move from Ridgewood to Paramus. In 2019, Audrey Meyers, Chief Executive Officer of Valley Health System, presided over the groundbreaking for the new building. And now, in 2024, the new hospital, servicing 32 communities in Bergen County and the surrounding area, will open. Moving the hospital from its home of 73 years is exciting, nostalgic and complex, but the challenge is worth it.

"The old village-based Valley Hospital," says Joe Lorino, Vice President of Facilities Management, "was built in the '60s, '70s and '80s. In each era, the new additions were state-of-the-art, but they were cobbled together. We now have an opportunity to create something so much better." A prime example is the flexible, practical and attractive design of patient rooms that provide an inviting and relaxing environment conducive to healing. Each is a single-patient room with a private bathroom, a sitting area, a couch that converts to a bed and ample space and privacy for loved ones to spend time together. Room service allows patients to order meals at their preferred times and a digital TV displays patient information, telemedicine video meetings with family members and, of course, entertainment.

The hospital has been constructed using state-of-the-art techniques including non-porous walls for maximum cleanliness, diagnostic imaging adjacent to emergency rooms and operating rooms for speedy evaluations, and a dedicated elevator to move patients quickly from the Emergency Department to surgical services. In a lesson learned from the pandemic, every patient room can be converted into a

critical care room if needed with greater oxygen flow, emergency power and other features. Real-Time Location Systems (RTLS) for personnel and equipment will improve workflows, efficiency and safety, while Inspiren's AUGi platform will alert staff to potential patient falls, one of the most common adverse events in a hospital. Patient comfort, care and satisfaction are top of the list in this transformation.

Then there is the sheer elegance of the campus. A water wall welcomes visitors as they enter, adding a sense of calm and serenity. Landscaped gardens, walking paths and roof gardens offer a glimpse of nature which contributes to wellness, and parking garage levels are even named after local parks. Contemporary architecture, stylized lighting, sweeping stairways and artwork from local artists add beauty to the space.

The new hospital is also the new home for several panels of the iconic Stefan Knapp mural originally displayed on the exterior of Alexander's Department Store from 1962 to 1992. Twenty-four panels are situated in the gardens and others, featuring the Polish-born artist's signature, are in the conference center. Valley anticipates placing additional panels throughout other Valley Health System locations, further preserving part of the area's history and culture.

More than 30% of the healthcare campus' 40 acres are open green space and a cogeneration plant will produce 30-40% of the hospital's power making it more energy efficient than most other hospitals. And Valley is pleased to be establishing a medical residency program in the new facility in collaboration with the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, further elevating the quality of care in the area.

The ceremonial ribbon cutting for The Valley Hospital in Paramus will be held in March, 2024. But the official "opening" will be on Sunday, April 14, when, beginning at 6:00 A.M., new hospital signs will be unveiled, old signs will be covered, and about 300 patients and their equipment will move from Ridgewood to Paramus. Planning has been underway for two years. "Our Transition Team has been meeting daily as the steel has been going up," notes Trish Clark, a former nurse and current Director of Facilities Development.

Among the preparations, about 60 ambulances have been leased to supplement the current fleet and ensure availability for any new health emergencies that occur that day. A "Mock Move Day" dress rehearsal

will be held, a command structure will be in place and patient routes have been mapped, even detailing which elevator will be used. Staff have been undergoing an orientation to the new hospital including a scavenger hunt to learn their way around, tackling questions like, "Where is the pharmacy?" "Can you find the imaging center nearest to this room?" "Where is the fire extinguisher in this area?"

Will Valley stay in Ridgewood? Yes. Outpatient services will continue in the Ridgewood facility including laboratory services, diagnostic imaging, physical therapy and additional services. Another question arises: "How long will it now take an ambulance to get me to the hospital?" "The Valley Hospital in Paramus is just seven minutes away from the Ridgewood campus" assures Joe, adding, "I tried it using a number of different routes both on and off Route 17." It's helpful to know that treatment begins in the ambulance even before the hospital, so care is constant. And an ambulance can come from any of the facilities in the local 911 network since emergency calls are dispatched to the closest vehicle available. So even now, ambulances arrive from different locations, not necessarily Valley.

The Valley team is confident that this move will yield significant benefits for patients and their families, for the staff and the community. Valley is grateful for the supportive environment that Ridgewood has provided since its inception and emphasizes that, though Valley is growing, it is not going away. "We are still here for you," notes Erin Blake, Manager of External Communications. "--- Only better."



Members of Valley's Project Team: Debra Aluotto, Project Coordinator; Joseph Lorino, Vice President of Facilities Management; Trish Clark, Director of Facilities Development.



Audrey Meyers, CEO of Valley Health System, with several panels of the Stefan Knapp mural preserved from Alexander's Department Store.

VALLEY by the Numbers:	The Valley Hospital Ridgewood Moving to Paramus	The Valley Hospital Paramus Opening Sunday, April 14	AND... 930,000 bricks
Operating Rooms	450 square feet	650-1,000 square feet	200,000 square feet of linoleum
Emergency Room	40 exam rooms some shared	80 exam rooms all private	64,000 square feet of tiles
Patient Rooms	140-200 square feet 2 patients/room	300 square feet 1 patient/room	38,600 cubic yards of concrete
Elevators	8 used concurrently by staff, patients and visitors	27 each dedicated for staff, patients or visitors	7,300 tons of steel
Boilers	2	10	4,500 square yards of carpet
Building Footprint	750,000 square feet	900,000 square feet	4,000+ total workers throughout the project