



## SLAM and Perkins&Will unveil Community Healthcare Hub

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Henrietta, NY Architect of record SLAM (The S/L/A/M Collaborative), along with project partner and design architect Perkins&Will, unveiled plans for the new University of Rochester Orthopaedics & Physical Performance Center. Phase one of the outpatient campus will be located in a former Sears retail space at the Marketplace Mall. Dwyer Architectural is the local construction administration architect for the project, which is set for a 2023 completion date. Once complete, it will be one of the largest outpatient orthopaedics facilities in the Northeast.

The new facility reflects a convergence between the surge in e-commerce resulting in available retail spaces and a growing demand for more robust healthcare infrastructure across the country.

“As healthcare facilities across the U.S. look to decentralize their services, the adaptive reuse of underutilized retail space represents a huge opportunity for institutions, like the University of

Rochester Medical Center (URMC), to expand their outpatient reach by moving to the mall.” said Scott Hansche, AIA, principal-in-charge at SLAM, who serves as architect of record for the project.

The full \$227 million, 350,000 s/f facility includes a 210,000 s/f renovated space and a 140,000 s/f new outpatient clinical services building that will house 140 exam rooms for orthopaedic care.

Designed to be patient-oriented, the team brought daylight into the existing Sears footprint through a series of skylights and an internal courtyard that also functions as a rehabilitation space. Overall, the design of the building’s sinuous facade represents the idea of movement, emblematic of the orthopaedic care provided within its walls.

### Bringing Healthcare into the Community

The new facility reflects a current urgency to find design solutions that expand infrastructure into underserved regions, helping to address the country’s healthcare equity gaps. One of the goals for the design team was to foster a feeling of familiarity and accessibility.

“Repurposing a traditional community anchor, such as a mall, helps upend perceptions of healthcare facilities as centralized urban complexes,” said Robert Goodwin, FAIA, design director of Perkins&Will’s New York studio. “We are integrating healthcare into the existing fabric of the community rather than asking patients to travel to a facility that might be hard to reach.”

The focus on accessibility was amplified through a series of decentralized entry points and the addition of a dedicated bus stop outside of the outpatient facility along the mall’s usual route.

“While the facility is in a distinctly suburban location, it was crucial that we make its services accessible to everyone within the community, including those without access to a car,” said Goodwin. “At the same time, because we are locating this facility at a mall, we knew there would be ample parking on site and that the community would know how to get here.”

### A Rapid and Resilient Solution to the Healthcare Supply Chain

Breathing a second life into an expansive yet under-utilized retail complex also yields both economic and environmental benefits, allowing the design team to repurpose existing infrastructure and resources, while reducing costs and construction times.

“We broke ground in June 2021 and the renovated portion is expected to be complete and opened by 2022,” said Hansche. “This speed to market scenario is a win-win for our team and URMC. With no need for permitting or no new roads, for example, we were able to focus on the University’s vision of growing their orthopaedics practice and integrating outpatient radiology, surgery, and treatment in one facility.”

The renovated portion of the project is 200,000 s/f of a surgical platform with three operating rooms, a three-room procedure suite, advanced imaging, clinical research, education, administration,

physical therapy, and a human performance and injury prevention center.

### A Synergistic Relationship between Mall and Medical Facility

The addition of URMC's outpatient facility is intended to have a mutually beneficial relationship with the remaining retail environment by providing additional foot traffic through the mall. A major entryway will connect and integrate the healthcare space to the rest of the campus, creating a mutually supportive relationship.

"We saw an opportunity to build a center that's not only right-sized for patient volumes, but also expands on treatment options and convenience for patients," said Paul Rubery, MD, chair of the Department of Orthopaedics at the University of Rochester Medical Center.

"This project answers an urgent, unmet need for patients: faster access to surgery and provider appointments, a convenient location, and a campus and treatment space designed precisely for patients with painful orthopaedic conditions and mobility challenges. This campus employs design strategies to make navigating the space as easy and comfortable as possible," said Rubery.

The multiphase project will be complete by 2023. The first phase, relocating the orthopaedic administrative offices to an adjacent renovated lease space, was complete and occupied in the fall of 2021. The second phase, the conversion of the former Sears store to an outpatient surgical center, will be complete by fall 2022. This will be followed by a rehab and sports performance center next spring, and a four-story, 144-bed clinic space in the fall of 2023.

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