

\$30M project set for Round Rock

BY KATE HARRINGTON

kharrington@bizjournals.com

Austin has made a name for itself in the sustainable-building industry, but the push to go green is now noticeably spreading to Round Rock.

In the coming months, Round Rock will see the start of construction on Green Square, a 135,000-square-foot, \$30 million office park development. Green Square is many things to many people much-needed space for the growing medical community and a vehicle towards high-paying jobs for Round Rock's city leaders. But it also represents the first significant green-building project in Round Rock and possibly all of Williamson County, where developers have traditionally been more conservative in building standards than their Travis County counterparts.

Developers Don Dungan and Kang Lee acquired the land on Greenhill Drive in August for \$1.1 million, and began designing the office project that will be comprised of seven individual buildings ranging from 10,500 square feet to 30,000 square feet each. Lee says the development will hold a mixture of medical and professional office space. But Green Square's developers are hoping the office park will stand out as much for its aesthetics and high performance as its utility.

Lee and Dungan are working with Carson Design Associates and Big Red Sun — the Austin design firm behind Hotel San Jose — and Carolyn Kelley, one of the landscape architects of Austin's City Hall,

GREEN SQUARE IN ROUND ROCK



SUBMITTED RENDERING

Those behind the Green Square project in Round Rock hope to attract big-time businesses that are environmentally conscious.

to bring the offices to life. Construction should start by May.

"These are not buildings for companies that want to put their workers in buildings with no windows," says Lee. "These are for leaders in their industries ... big corporations are starting to go green."

The development's sustainable elements will include energy-efficient wall materials, rainwater collection and the use of recycled materials. Lee says he's hoping to attain a platinum-level Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design certification from the U.S. Green Building Council. A landscaped plaza with patios, shaded areas and a central corridor of green space will tie in aesthetic features.

Green Square's first tenant, the Williamson County Association of Realtors, will occupy a 10,500-square-foot building.

Dungan says he's talking with other potential tenants.

"I know of a couple other projects that are going to be built [like] this," says Gary Cocanougher, a Realtor with the association. "Some [builders] declare themselves as green, but once you see the depth of this, it blows you away."

Cocanougher says he anticipates green building taking hold in Williamson County, and hopes the Realtor association's participation in Green Square will lead the county's business community in becoming open to sustainable-building projects. While green-building projects come with an image many Texas builders haven't been ready to embrace, Cocanougher says he thinks Central Texans are beginning to realize that green building is more about saving on energy and water costs than simply tree hugging.