Since 1956, Wayne Memorial Hospital has proudly served a large rural area in southern Georgia. Through the years the hospital had gone through numerous renovations and expansions, creating a maze of hallways and department adjacencies that were not advantageous to a healing environment and created an inefficient workplace.

A HEALING ENVIRONMENT EMERGES FROM LOGIC AND EFFICIENCY
FOR EXAMPLE, a patient needing a cesarian section required transporting a woman in labor past public areas of the hospital, through multiple turns and corridors along the path to the operating room. It was clear to the hospital’s administration that a new facility was necessary.

Before a floor plan was even created, GS&P architects, planners and engineers met with hospital staff to understand the operational processes currently taking place throughout the facility, including patient and material flow. GS&P healthcare strategist, Marc Sauvé, led studies to review the flow of operations, systems and functionality to create a plan from which department locations and adjacencies could be culled. In the case of Wayne Memorial it was decided to locate all hospital

Above The hospital is filled with natural light that pours through the numerous windows, especially those at the ends of corridors. There are even windows in the post-anesthesia recovery unit to help encourage patients. Above Right and Right The interior design uses colors and materials that reflect its natural environment—the low coastal terrain and its vegetation. It fits very comfortably in the context of southeast Georgia.
registration—inpatient, outpatient and emergency department—in one place. Marc’s research also helped shape how the staff worked. Hospital administrators were able to implement many of Sauvé's suggestions while still operating in the old facility.

In the new facility, the operational efficiencies that were planned and designed into the building helped alleviate wait times by 50 minutes in the emergency department. The early process mapping also significantly improved both patient experience and safety. Although the hospital area grew from a one-story building to four stories, travel distances within the hospital and the chance for medical errors have been greatly reduced. Labor and delivery rooms are adjacent to surgical suites, so a need for immediate procedures is not delayed by a long journey through corridors and around corners.

Another important feature that the hospital staff wanted implemented was creating a healing environment for patients. GS&P architects and interior designers designed several features that accommodate patients’ families such as kitchens in waiting rooms and a charming outdoor dining venue and a small chapel. Space in the hospice room was doubled. Also a clear delineation between public and private sectors stresses patient dignity and privacy.

An unforeseen challenge to the team was the sudden rising cost of construction labor and materials. Between the project kickoff and the start of construction, Hurricane Katrina caused the costs to soar nearly 10% higher than expected, putting the project suddenly millions over budget. The team and the hospital administration worked together to revise the budget and reduce the size of the new building, bringing scope and cost down. This was made possible by the administration’s purchase of a nearby armory, to which they relocated services that don’t directly impact patient care, such as accounting and administration.

The new hospital was built on the same location as the old facility, which created a hurdle for design and construction. Its location near a major state highway and convenience to the community was a key driver in the decision to use the same site, but keeping the existing hospital functional while...
“Everything that was promised... was delivered. And then some. The firm has always gone above and beyond what was expected. [The] project was able to exceed all of its targets and goals, and the citizens in our service area are thrilled by this new, state-of-the-art building...”

— JOSEPH P. IERARDI
President, Wayne Memorial Hospital