Stanford Hospital & Clinics and Rafael Viñoly Architects presented their vision for the development of the new Stanford Hospital on Monday. The unveiling marks an exciting milestone in advancing the hospital's plans to build for the future, increase capacity to meet the healthcare needs of the community, and design with earthquake safety standards in mind.

Rather than creating the typical base-and-tower hospital building, the firm has proposed a modular plan that can be easily adapted for different uses, allowing for both incremental expansion of the hospital building and a horizontal massing strategy that matches the low-rise campus context of Stanford University and the Stanford Hospital & Clinics.

A universal module, roughly 150 feet square, is deployed in a checkerboard pattern. This yields a floor plan that, on the upper levels, alternates hospital functions with open courtyards. On these upper floors, patient rooms line the perimeter of the structure to maximize daylight and provide views in these areas, with nurses' stations and support spaces on the interior. On the lower floors, the modules form large, contiguous floor plans that accommodate the lobby, cafeteria and other public spaces, as well as the operating rooms, emergency department, imaging department, and critical hospital functions that require flexibility and connectivity in floor

organization and circulation.

The design reinterprets and updates the open-air courtyard arrangement of the preexisting medical facilities in Stanford, integrating the hospital with nature by means of a large garden courtyard in the center of the building. This courtyard is a main organizing element of the design and includes a prominent water feature and landscaped areas that create a welcoming environment for visitor use.

The third floor of the hospital includes many of the building's public amenities including conference facilities, dining and retail along with extensive areas of roof terrace. Light-filled glass corridors wrap the central courtyard and extend along roof gardens, connecting the public to elevators that serve the bed floors above.

"We are very pleased to have the opportunity to engage in a project that means so much to so many," said Rafael Viñoly. " We are challenging outdated conventions in hospital design to establish a new architectural identity for Stanford Hospital that will allow it to continue to provide outstanding care for its community as well as innovate and develop treatments that will benefit communities the world over."

"We are thrilled to have reached this major milestone in creating the new Stanford Hospital," said President & CEO Martha Marsh. "Rafael Viñoly has brought creativity and innovation to translating our vision, as well as future flexibility to assure that these exciting facilities will keep pace with rapid advances in medicine and technology."

Stanford University Medical Center has submitted a formal application to the City of Palo Alto for the Renewal Project. The City of Palo Alto is conducting the required Environmental Impact Report (EIR) process, which includes multiple opportunities for public comment. Phased construction is scheduled to begin in 2010 provided the City approval process is completed by fall 2009.