

Urban Plains buzzing

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Construction has started on the first of many retail buildings planned in the Urban Plains development in southwest Fargo.

There will be space for 10 retailers in the 12,000-square-foot facility south of 26th Avenue and west of 45th Street, just south of Famous Dave's Barbeque. "To see some action out there is pretty exciting," said Blake Nybakken, Development Specialist for ICON Architectural Group. The planning process always takes awhile.

"The names of prospective stores and restaurants to be in the building cannot be confirmed at this time, Nybakken said. "There will be several different types of users in there," Nybakken said. "Everything that would go into a normal retail development."

The facility should be finished and ready for retailers in November. "We're definitely going to have a different look to our buildings," Nybakken said. "It's going to be really nice, a lot of glass and varying elevations to give it a little height on the front. We've got the ability to do drive-throughs on both sides. We've got a lot of different options on this building."

The facility is the initial building on a block planned to have nearly 200,000 square feet of retail, known as the Shoppes at Urban Plains, over the next several years.

"With additional retail, it's a reflection of the growth of the community because as the population grows and as the business community grows, retail and restaurants and other things tend to follow because the demand or the need is there," said David Martin, president and chief executive officer of the Chamber of Commerce of Fargo Moorhead.

At the same time it provides additional amenities for people in the community. The Shoppes is part of a larger city within a city development by Fargo developer Ace Brandt. The 328-acre Urban Plains by Brandt development, which runs from 32nd Avenue South to 26th Avenue and 45th Street to 57th Street, is designed to give a neighborhood feel in its combination of homes, shops, restaurants, businesses and a 24-acre park with 10 acres of water and a trail system.

"We think the whole development will have a very positive effect," Martin said. "It's in the growth area, not just of Fargo, but the whole metro area."

Construction has also started on a \$44 million Urban Plains Center and Tournament Facility located on 15 acres of land north of 32nd Avenue. The sports arena is scheduled for completion in the fall of 2008. The office park is up and is nearly finished. The medical facility has also been constructed.

Plans for the condos are currently under way with construction expected to start this fall and completed next year, said Kevin Ritterman, president and principal broker for Dakota Commercial and Development Co.

"We're pretty excited," Nybakken said. "There's a lot going on out at Urban Plains right now. We get increasing national and international attention because of the growth and development of our community and that's exciting and it benefits all of us and this is just another example of that," Martin said.

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