

PRESS & GUIDE

Town Center Project breaks ground

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DEARBORN - With shovels in hand, representatives from Oakwood Healthcare, the city of Dearborn, Midwest Health Center and Redico Development Company broke ground Wednesday on the \$70 million mixed use development project known as the Dearborn Town Center.

Located in the heart of downtown East Dearborn on the corner of Michigan Avenue and Schaefer where the old Montgomery Ward building once stood, the Dearborn Town Center will offer multi-specialty medical care, retail, office space and an assisted living facility for seniors. Oakwood and Redico will jointly own the medical office development, which will span more than 125,000 square feet.



"Oakwood has made a commitment to revitalize downtown east Dearborn by investing in a state-of-the-art development and we are proud to partner with Midwest, Redico Development Company and the city of Dearborn in order to make this investment a reality," said Brian Connolly, president and CEO, Oakwood Healthcare, Inc. (OHI).

"Oakwood and Midwest share a longstanding presence in the Dearborn community and we are eager to bring this project to life and serve our friends and neighbors in this region."

In January of this year, Oakwood acquired all five Midwest Health Center locations from Dr. Mark Saffer and his partners, including offices in Dearborn, Detroit, Livonia, Romulus and Taylor. Management of the day-to-day operations of the facilities will continue to be overseen by Dr. Saffer's management company.

The Dearborn Town Center will serve as the new home of the Dearborn Midwest Health Center, which has been serving the community for many years.

"For more than 30 years, I've focused on meeting the health care needs of the people in this community," said Dr. Saffer. "I look forward to expanding the practice into an innovative new medical facility where our excellent physicians and their staff can continue to provide the best care for their patients."

With the acquisition of the Midwest Health Centers, Oakwood and Dr. Saffer believe the opportunity to provide a comprehensive array of health care services while growing the business will have an important impact on the community.

"Although the economy and the health care industry is severely challenged, Oakwood realizes it is an economic engine for the region," said Doug Weldon, chief financial officer, OHI. "I'm proud to say this project is one of those opportunities that will revitalize the community while positively impacting our future and directly benefiting those who live and work in this community."

The development includes three new structures totaling 275,000 square feet with a 168,000 square foot medical office building, a retail/office building, and a six-level parking deck, which will be available at no cost to the public. The \$70 million project is expected to create 206 new jobs and retain 300 more.

"None of this would have been possible without Dr. Saffer and his vision," said Dale Watchowski, president and CEO of Redico Development Company. "The conception for this project was all about serving the community."

The project is made possible with support from the city of Dearborn, the Dearborn Brownfield Redevelopment Authority, the Downriver Area Brownfield Consortium, the East Dearborn Downtown Development Authority and the State of Michigan.

"Success is determined by the company you keep, and we've had some very good company," said Dearborn Mayor Jack O'Reilly.

The city of Dearborn purchased the property on the corner of Michigan and Schaefer for \$3.35 million in 2005 and selected Redico Development Company as its preferred developer in 2007.

"This project has been three years in the making," Watchowski said, adding that construction could begin as early as tomorrow with a completion date set for December 2010.

Dearborn Chamber of Commerce President Jennifer Giering said she's excited to see how things developing on the historic street corner.

"I think that corner is symbolic of what Dearborn has become," she said. "It's all about growth, and I'm very excited to see what the future holds for our community."

For more on the new Dearborn Town Center development, see future editions of the Press & Guide.