



EDITORIAL

Progress Ridge offers needed jobs, amenities

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It looks like Beaverton will have another defining feature – courtesy of the private sector.

The recent announcement that construction of Progress Ridge TownSquare in southwest Beaverton is ready to start is very good news for many reasons. Construction of the 325,000-square-foot center that is being called an urban village will bring hundreds of construction jobs at a time when the local economy still jumps forward or shudders with a chill every time national or international news is reported.

Long-term, the long-standing vacant area that rests between Murrayhill and Tigard's Bull Mountain will feature dozens of retail businesses and entertainment facilities that will add hundreds of local jobs and provide even greater shopping choices and nearby quality of life amenities.

And all of this through the investment of a local developer, Barry Cain of Tualatin-based Gramor Development, who helped lead the successful private sector revitalization of downtown Lake Oswego – with definite support from that city.

"Our goal is to build a place where people will just want to come and hang out – a place people can gather with their neighbors that is within walking distance," Cain told Valley Times News Editor Christina Lent. "I think we've come up with the best project we've ever done. It will be great for the people around here for many, many years to come."

Cain expects businesses to open their doors in September 2011, when the center is completed.

Certainly, Gramor is in the development business to make a profit. But attempting to do so in these economic times comes with risk. In this case, Gramor is borrowing \$45 million of the Progress Ridge TownSquare's \$60 million estimated price tag at a time when many businesses are not investing.

We think Progress Ridge TownSquare offers rewards, both financially and for community livability.

The development site has been vacant for years. Over time as the communities of Tigard and Beaverton have grown around it, residential single family and multi-family housing development has filled the surrounding neighborhoods with almost 30,000 residents. The TownSquare project will bring more nearby shopping choices, amenities including a lake and pathways and improved traffic controls for these local residents.

And for 20 or more years, nearby Barrows Road was a cut-through passageway for many commuters to get from Tigard or Beaverton to Scholls, Newberg, Hillsboro or Forest Grove. With a new development of shops and other features, the once-vacant fields will help provide a new destination and greater sense of community.

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