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## Clackamas gets a super mall

— "I think it's going to be one of the most important retail areas, other than downtown Portland, in its future years."

Tom Vanderzanden  
Clackamas County planner

— "It's going to be one of the focal points of the West."

Terry W. Protto  
Clackamas Meier & Frank  
store manager

— "It's very innovative and complex... it's a hell of a big thing."

Bob Schumacher  
Clackamas County Commissioner

CLACKAMAS — It's bigger than Washington Square, almost as close as Lloyd Center and one of the most coordinated retail developments to nestle its concrete foundation in Oregon soil.

It's... it's... SUPERMALL!  
Clackamas Town Center, the 107-acre shopping mall nearing completion between Interstate-205 and Southeast 82nd Avenue north of Sunnyside Road, is expected to have about 130 of its 180 stores open in time for its March grand opening. Meier & Frank's mall store has been open since Oct. 1.

The mall's four other major stores — J.C. Penney, Sears, Nordstrom and Montgomery Ward — will open with the remaining stores in April or late spring.

The two-level shopping center, with its ice rink, restaurants, movie theater and banks, is part of a larger 853-acre Town Center development area scheduled to undergo extensive improvement during the next six years.

Clackamas County commissioners recently approved establishing a tax increment financing district in the area to fund nearly half of the \$32 million in improvements. They include a new interchange along I-205, buying two park sites, building a new fire and police station, building walkways and bikeways, possible day care facilities and a Clackamas Community College satellite center.

Add the county's plans to attract light industrial firms and high-density residential developments and to reserve a right-of-way for a future light rail system, and Tri-Met's plans to build a transit center near the Town Center, and "super-mall" takes on a new perspective.

"It's much more than a shopping center," says Clackamas County commissioner Ralph Groener. "It's an activity center with a mixture of retail, industrial and professional office developments, open spaces, restaurants, a library, you name it."

It's a European concept, "the idea of living close to where you work, an energy-conserving way of thinking," Groener says. "It's the kind of thing we've got to do for the future."

"It's novel," says Tom Vanderzanden, a Clackamas County planner who's "nursed" the town center plan along since its inception some five years ago. "There are other regional shopping centers, sure, but this is a town center... a community focus. The things that make it different are the planning and the infrastructure around it."

That planning and the supportive developments around the mall should prevent it from becoming "a dinosaur in 15 years," Vanderzanden says.

When Earnest Hahn, the mall's Los Angeles-based developer, came to the county with his development plans, "We said, 'hey, if you're going to plopp that shopping center in that area, let's look at it,'" says Commissioner Bob Schumacher. "Look at Washington Square... it's just there. It's obvious they didn't plan around it."

Terry W. Protto, manager of the Clackamas Meier & Frank store, says the store's "testing of the water" at the new mall site has been more favorable than expected. "We're very pleased... we've done much better than planned," Protto says. "We've been free-standing and doing very well. We look forward to the tremendous potential for this mall."

The May Co., which owns Meier & Frank, has about a 40



Clackamas County Commissioner Ralph Groener



Meier & Frank store manager Terry W. Protto

percent financial interest in the mall, Protto says. Its Clackamas store is the largest of the mall's five major stores and, with 180,000 square feet, is "10 percent" bigger than the Washington Square store, he says.

Still, the mall and surrounding area will not be without their problems, points out Groener. "There'll be traffic problems, yes," and an increased burden on the county sheriff's office, he said. (Meier & Frank was robbed Sept. 29, just a few days before its grand opening, but all property was recovered and the incident did not seriously ruffle corporate feathers, says Protto.)

But "the pluses outweigh the minuses," Groener says. "I think we'll have reason to be proud of ourselves."