

The Hinman Company

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Portage, MI - Two well-known developers in Southwest Michigan will team with world-renowned architects to develop an office complex visible from I-94 near S. Westnedge in Portage.

Approvals will be sought for the project from the City of Portage over the next two months. If approvals are granted, the development will include a highly modern look with state-of-the-art energy and technological efficiencies, according to Greg Dobson, spokesperson for the owners, developers and managers.

The first three-story building, with 78,500 square feet of office and commercial space, will be centrally located in the 20-acre development between the highway and a naturally wooded area with wetlands. The building will be accessible from South Westnedge Avenue, just north of I-94 where retail and restaurant development has been taking place in recent years. Completion is expected in the fall of 2004.

"We're very excited about this location," said Dobson, "and we feel this is also an expression of optimism about the economic development future of the region."

The development team includes the principals of The Hinman Company and American Village Builders, along with Minoru Yamasaki Associates Inc., designers of buildings around the world.

Infrastructure funding will be requested through the Downtown Development Authority of the City of Portage to facilitate project development, according to Dobson.

The first tenant of the new building will be the combined Kalamazoo and Battle Creek offices of Plante & Moran, PLLC - a professional services firm with offices throughout Michigan and Ohio. Plante & Moran, known for its strong client relationships, has been recognized by a number of organizations, including Fortune magazine, as one of the country's best places to work.

"This is a great opportunity for us to invest and grow in Southwest Michigan," said Brad Thompson, managing partner for the Kalamazoo and Battle Creek offices. "By combining our resources, we are able to share greater industry and service expertise with our clients in the region. The location near the highway meets our criteria of easy access to I-94 and US 131 and will be a benefit to those we serve and our staff that live throughout the area."

According to Dobson, Plante & Moran will lease about a third of the space in the first building. Plans for future buildings will be announced as more space is leased in the first building, Dobson said.

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