

Wal-Mart, Home Depot in first phase of Pavilion at Durbin Park; Bass Pro Shops in second phase

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By Karen Brune Mathis, Managing Editor

One of the area's largest and most anticipated retail developments is about to take off in northern St. Johns County.

Gate Petroleum Co. and Gatlin Development Co., both based in Jacksonville, are launching the 80-acre Pavilion at Durbin Park within the much larger Durbin Park project.

The initial 700,000 square feet of development will include Wal-Mart Supercenter and Home Depot, along with more than 350,000 square feet of retail, restaurant and junior anchor-tenant uses.

That is according to marketing materials at Wednesday's International Council of Shopping Centers North Florida Idea Exchange and developer Frank Gatlin.

"It is under construction and we are delivering," Gatlin said of the retail services that will be available to area residents.

A St. Johns County official said when the project was announced in June that Durbin Park will provide convenient retail and office opportunities currently not available to St. Johns County residents, as well as keep sales tax dollars local and support countywide programs and services.

The first phase, estimated at a \$125 million investment, is expected to start opening in 2018 and be completed in 2019, Gatlin said.

He said about \$10 million of infrastructure work has been let and the clearing and grading have begun. Pads should be delivered by midyear.

Gate expects to open a store and Gate Express Carwash at the site in the first quarter of 2018, Gatlin said.

He declined to identify the other stores and restaurants in negotiation for the Pavilion, although the location lends itself to the many retailers that locate in major shopping centers.

The Shopping Center Group is the leasing representative.

The Pavilion is the first phase of the 1,600-acre Durbin Park, which is designed for about 2.4 million square feet of retail space, 2.8 million square feet of office space, 999 multifamily housing units and about 350 hotel rooms.

The Durbin Park site, which is west along Interstate 95 south of Race Track Road, has been cleared. The Pavilion is south of Race Track Road west of Florida 9B.

Florida 9B is on target for completion, providing more access to Durbin Park.

The first phase of big box, junior anchors and other stores will lead to development of the second phase, which will feature the long-awaited Bass Pro Shops as well as more department and specialty stores, higher-end retailers and entertainment, such as a theater.

Completion for that phase is anticipated in two to five years.

"Phase One is what validates it," Gatlin said.

The full project is planned over four phases.

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