

NEW RETAIL DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED FOR CITY

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Talks of growth and development abound for Watford City and its surrounding areas as a major commercial developer, the Oppidan group, has proposed to build an 118,000 sq. ft. retail space south of Watford City on the corner of the Highway 23 bypass and Highway 85.

Jay Moore, a project developer with Oppidan states that they have been in business for over 21 years and have completed 300 retail projects all across the country, and now they are focusing their attention on the oil country of western North Dakota.

“Our anchor tenant, Coborn’s Grocery Store, sees a need in western North Dakota and wants to be in Watford City as fast as possible,” states Moore.

According to Moore, the need seen by Coborn’s, whose business is grocery, pharmacy, gas and liquor is to provide a full-service grocery store to the community.

“Our ultimate goal is to provide the community with a new shopping experience,” Moore states. “We’ve heard repeatedly through various meetings that Watford City consumers are having to travel as far as Williston to obtain needed goods and services. We’d like to provide them another option.”

Other confirmed businesses who will be part of the Oppidan Development include ALCO and McDonald’s, as well as an

unnamed hardware store. Ideally, there would also be space set aside for a car wash, and other small shop retailers within the complex.

Moore states that Oppidan's goal in this commercial development is to provide a first class retail development that will bring options to Watford City and its surrounding areas.

Moore also states that Oppidan is committed to western North Dakota.

"With six other possible development sites in the Bakken region, we are not just going to build in the community and then leave," states Moore. "We plan on staying and investing in the area for a long time."

The inclusion of a liquor store in Oppidan's proposed development has become somewhat of a contingency, however.

According to Moore, the ability to sell liquor off-site is a critical component to their anchor tenant, Coborn's.

"Should that part of the development fall through, our anchor tenant may seek to develop in another site before building in Watford City," states Moore.

All that is up in the air, however, until the Watford City City Council decides on whether or not it will change their off-sale liquor license policy.

In the meantime, Moore feels strongly that western North Dakota, and specifically the Watford City area, is a good investment.

"We believe the community is growing and will continue to grow," states Moore. "If we didn't, we wouldn't be looking so intently at making such a big investment in the area."

Watford City Mayor Brent Sanford states, "The plan the city council was shown by Oppidan had a large grocery store, variety store, hardware store, car wash, fast food restaurant and a gas station. Retail expansion is something many people have been waiting for as the population continues to arrive. But due to the mostly temporary nature of the living accommodations available to our new residents, retail expansion had been lagging. It would now appear that the choices made by local officials to promote permanent housing development has made this type of retail development a very real possibility for Watford City."