

# Leasing activity fills The Huron at Portage Prairie

The first building at Portage Prairie has been filled, with two new tenants taking more than 100,000 square feet of warehouse, industrial and office space.

Portage Prairie is a planned mixed use development on the northwest side of South Bend that in time is expected to include retail, medical offices, an assisted living facility, light industrial businesses, hotels and restaurants.

The Huron building was the first to start construction.

"We've filled up the Huron building," says Paul Phair of Holladay Proper-

ties, adding that a manufacturing operation has moved into one space and a distribution operation is expected to start in the fall.

Global Parts Network, an Illinois-based company that manufactures and distributes brake shoes and related parts for heavy-duty commercial vehicles, opened July 11 in 73,000 square feet. It expects to have 30 employees when it is running at capacity next year.

"We opened this facility in the South Bend area to service customers on the eastern side of the country," says Steve Crowley, president and chief executive of VIPAR

Heavy Duty Inc., which owns Global Parts Network.

VIPAR has some 120 associates, called stockholders, with 550 locations, including Power Brake and Spring Service. It sells a wide array of commercial vehicle parts.

Crowley says the company, which considered locations in Illinois, Ohio, Kentucky and



Phair

Indiana for the plant, has invested about \$2 million in equipment and another \$2 million in raw goods at the South Bend operation.

"It's a great location," Crowley says. "It's got a decent work force. It fits our specifications almost perfectly. We're up and running but not at capacity. We have more orders than we can fill right now."

A local distribution firm that has outgrown its space in Mishawaka is expected to use another 33,000 square feet in the building. Holladay Properties of South Bend has not yet released the name of that company.

Phair says leasing activity for existing space was strong in late 2010 but has slowed, and opportunities for new construction lag. Holladay is working to pre-lease a second Portage Prairie building, the Ontario.

A printing firm that had leased another 40,000 square feet has gone out of business but will sublease its space in the building that

has a total of 146,000 square feet.

Phair says another vacant warehouse space, the former DHL's 25,000 square feet in a 10-year-old, 100,000-square-foot building near Tire Rack, is within the market's most active size range. "It's kind of move-in ready at this point. It's nice, clean, good space for somebody," Phair says. It's conditioned, 24-foot clear height, 2,000 square feet for office.

"We're hoping it's not going to be on the market too much longer. We seem to have a lot of activity and it's moving in the right direction."

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