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## Done deal: Kohl's coming

Retailer signs lease to build store at proposed Market Shoppes complex

By Tiffeny Owens

The worst-kept secret in town is now a done deal.

National retailer Kohl's signed a lease this week with development company Market Shoppes Venture to build a 55,500-square-foot store in the proposed Market Shoppes shopping center on U.S. 31. ULTA Salon, a beauty supply shop and hair salon with locations in Huntsville, Birmingham and Tuscaloosa, has signed on, too, according to Morgan County probate documents filed Tuesday.

The news caps months of negotiations between property owners David Gillespie and son David Gillespie Jr. and developer Blackwater to purchase the 10-acre site. Car dealer James Bramlett turned over the deed to his 23,600-square-foot lot on Brooks Street Southeast. The 80,000-square-foot shopping center is scheduled to open in October 2012 with annual sale projections of \$15 million.

The cost of the land deal was not listed in court documents, and all the parties involved declined to divulge the price.

The documents do show that a \$4.895 million construction loan between the developers was taken out on the property.

"We should start clearing the property and getting the site ready to build next week," said John Abernathy, director of leasing and development for Blackwater Resources in Birmingham.

Developers have retained Atlanta firm Fulcrum Construction as general contractor on the project. The company will work with Huntsville's Reed Contracting Services, he said.

While developers remain in negotiations with a second unnamed anchor tenant, ULTA Salon also has a lease. The chain has 415 stores across the country and specializes in name-brand cosmetics, fragrance, hair and skin-care products and hair-styling tools. The Decatur location could include a full-service salon for cuts, color, waxing and skin treatments.

Ten to 12 smaller units in the shopping center will also be available to rent, Abernathy said.

Despite signing a lease, Kohl's remained mum on the project Tuesday. Abernathy said the retailer may be waiting until it begins hiring before making an official announcement.



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