

News

From the Troy Times

Article published May 28, 2008

Booming business brings new jobs to Troy

By TERRY OPARKA C & G Staff Writer

Development and redevelopment in Troy continue as a new restaurant plans to open, two high tech businesses expand, and the mixed-use, \$320-million development planned at the former Kmart Headquarters gets a \$13 million boost from state coffers. Eco Motors International, which develops diesel engines, plans to open a \$7 million technical center in Troy.

La Marsa Mediterranean Cuisine Restaurant plans to open a restaurant on the site of the former La Shish on Rochester Road.

LMS, an engineering firm based in Belgium, will move its North American corporate headquarters to Troy.

Pavilions of Troy, the \$320 million mixed-use development planned for the site of the former Kmart Headquarters, was awarded a \$13.2 million tax credit from the Michigan Economic Growth Authority.

Last month, the Troy City Council approved a \$3.87 million, 20-year Brownfield reimbursement for Pavilions of Troy to pay for environmental cleanup and contamination prevention after the building on the site is imploded. The money would be captured from any Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation and Oakland Intermediate School District tax increases resulting from development on the site.

Last week, MEGA approved a \$13.2 million state tax credit for Pavilions of Troy, based on the state education tax revenues captured from tax increases resulting from development on the site.

MEGA also approved a \$5.1 million, 10-year tax credit for Eco Motors based on a \$7 million investment that will create 156 jobs and 183 spin-off jobs. The Troy City Council is scheduled to consider a 12-year personal property tax abatement for the company within the next 60 days.

LMS, which first opened a location in Troy in 1989 with six employees, manufactures virtual simulation software and testing systems, and provides engineering services to the automotive, aerospace and defense industries. The company currently employs 90 people in the Troy headquarters.

"We're very pleased to have LMS in Troy," said Brian Murphy, assistant city manager and economic development services director. He said the company was also considering locating its North American headquarters in Iowa. LMS will occupy the space formerly leased by Collins Aikens.

Earlier this year, the U.S. government seized assets, including the liquor license, in shutting down the La Shish restaurant on Rochester Road, along with and 10 other La Shish locations, after business owner Talal Khalil Chahine, who operated 11 restaurants in metro Detroit, was charged with extortion, criminal tax evasion in connection with a scheme to conceal and transfer more than \$20 million to

Lebanon, and conspiring to defraud the U.S. by obtaining immigration benefits, including permanent resident status, through use of false marriages arranged with La Shish employees who were U.S. citizens.

Mohamed El Neger, a partner with **La Marsa**, said the company plans to open at the site of the former La Shish restaurant on Rochester Road in another month. The owners plan to redecorate, change the carpet to tile, and paint.

"We're going to fix it and make it nice," said partner Fadhel Ganouni.

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