

For More Information Contact:
Jim Nolan (402) 351-2944

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Midtown Crossing recognized as model urban neighborhood

**Mutual of Omaha Breaks Ground for
Midtown Crossing at Turner Park Development**

OMAHA, Neb. – Mutual of Omaha today broke ground for Midtown Crossing at Turner Park, a \$300 million mixed-use development that will bring nearly 600 apartments and condominiums as well as new dining, retail and entertainment venues to historic Midtown Omaha.

The groundbreaking signals the official start of construction on the project, which will be built in a single phase and is slated to open in the fall of 2009, according to Mutual Senior Vice President John McClelland.

“With this groundbreaking, we begin to realize the vision of all of those who have worked to bring new life and energy to Midtown Omaha,” McClelland said. “This represents the first major development tied to the Destination Midtown project, and we at Mutual of Omaha are proud to be the catalyst for making the vision a reality.”

Developed by ECI Investment Advisors, Inc., Midtown Crossing at Turner Park features seven buildings totaling 1 million square feet, with approximately 220,000 square feet available for restaurants, retailers and entertainment venues as well as 297 condominium units, 268 apartments and parking for more than 3,000 vehicles.

An expanded and revitalized Turner Park will anchor the project, which encompasses approximately 15 acres bordered by 31st and 33rd streets, Dodge to Harney streets.

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Midtown Crossing to Set Standard

Midtown Crossing is a model for the redevelopment of urban neighborhoods and has been chosen to participate in the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) pilot Neighborhood Development Certification program, said ECI Executive Vice President Keith Bawolek.

LEED for Neighborhood Development recognizes projects that protect and enhance the overall health, natural environment and quality of life in their communities. It includes best practices in smart location and transportation linkage; environmental preservation; compact, complete and connected neighborhoods; and high-performance, green construction and technology.

"We are proud to participate in the LEED Neighborhood Development pilot and to be among the projects that set the standard for best practices in new urban development," Bawolek said. "With more than seven acres of green space in the new Turner Park, we are building a city in the park with residences, services, dining and entertainment in close proximity to the city's major employers and existing public transportation."

By participating in the Neighborhood Development Certification program, Midtown Crossing will be among the first developments in the nation to receive the LEED neighborhood certification. Sixty projects throughout the nation have been selected for the pilot, and Midtown Crossing is the only development in Nebraska or Iowa selected for the pilot phase.

Anchor Tenants Plan Cutting-Edge Facilities

Two anchor tenants – Douglas Theatres and Prairie Life Fitness – have signed on to the project and plan unique Midtown Crossing facilities, Bawolek said.

Douglas Theatres will operate a 1,000 seat, five-screen theater that includes a mezzanine-level bistro restaurant and bar. The theater will also include in-seat dining and cocktail service before and during each film. All theatres will be equipped with wall-to-wall screens, digital sound and digital projection systems with 3-D capabilities.

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Prairie Life Fitness will mark its third Omaha location at Midtown Crossing. With just over 31,000 square feet, the club will feature a full-service health and fitness facility complete with indoor running track, cycling studio, mind-body studio and numerous group fitness and personal training opportunities. Prairie Life's signature first-class locker rooms, massage, snack bar and nursery amenities are also planned for the club.

"Douglas Theatres and Prairie Life Fitness are both Nebraska-based businesses that recognized the potential Midtown offers and designed unique concepts that enhance the lifestyle we are creating at Midtown Crossing," Bawolek said.

Midtown Crossing's plans also include an urban grocery store, corporate extended stay apartments, a variety of pedestrian-friendly retail and specialty food establishments, as well as a mix of casual and fine dining and entertainment venues.

"Midtown Crossing will be a vibrant, urban neighborhood that not only provides a great environment for its residents, but also is a destination for people from throughout the area," Bawolek said.

Cope Linder Architects, a Philadelphia-based firm with extensive experience in similar redevelopment projects, and the Omaha firm of Holland Basham Architects are collaborating on the project.

For more information on Midtown Crossing at Turner Park and regular updates on the project, visit www.midtowncrossing.com.

Mutual of Omaha is a full-service, multi-line organization providing insurance and financial products for individuals, businesses and groups throughout the United States. For more information about Mutual of Omaha, visit www.mutualofomaha.com.

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