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Bustling exit gets another boost

by George Hohmann
Daily Mail Business Editor

Gov. Joe Manchin was expected to join private developers today at Bridgeport to break ground for a 250-acre business park.

White Oaks Business Park is being constructed off the Jerry Dove Drive exit of Interstate 79. It's a busy intersection. The FBI's Criminal Justice Information Services Division is off the same exit, as is United Hospital Center's \$290 million campus, which is under construction. Another business park, Charles Pointe, is on the northbound side of the Interstate.

Developers envision White Oaks will eventually contain retail stores, offices, health care and leisure facilities. The business park is expected to generate \$150 million in new building construction and take about seven years to fully develop.

The law firm of Steptoe & Johnson was among the firms expected to announce today that they will locate an office at White Oaks.

In remarks prepared for delivery at the groundbreaking, Bob Steptoe, the law firm's chief executive officer, said, "As Clarksburg, Fairmont and Morgantown continue to merge into a single economic area we want to be closer to the center of these developments. Our office relocation is a firm-wide commitment to the growth of Harrison County and north-central West Virginia, where we have been part of the community for almost 100 years.

"The new office will give our clients and lawyers easy access to transportation routes and closer proximity to both existing and emerging businesses along the I-79 corridor," Steptoe said.


High Tech Corridor Development, a limited liability company managed by H. Wood "Woody" Thrasher, is developing White Oaks. Thrasher also is president of Thrasher Engineering Inc. of Clarksburg.

John "Jack" Keeley of Ground Breakers Inc., a Clarksburg earth moving contractor, and Dean Ramsey, a Harrison County attorney, also are involved in High Tech Corridor Development.

The company has retained ECHO Real Estate Services of Pittsburgh to market White Oaks. A brochure about the business park is posted on ECHO's Web site. Visit www.echoretail.com and click on "Property Listings."

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