

EAST POINT'S LATEST CATCH

Retail East side shopping destination announces new bank building



An artist's rendering of the East Point Shopping development, facing north, shows the location of a new Costco and TD Canada Trust. Both stores are expected to open next spring.

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SAINT JOHN – A TD Canada Trust branch is the newest addition to the East Point Shopping development.

Construction work has started on the building, which will house the first TD bank on the city's east side, said John Wheatley of East Point Inc.

"When people go out to do their shopping, they want a wide range of services, and banking is one of them," Wheatley said this week.

The bank will be located on Retail Drive, off Westmorland Road, next to a Costco store, which is also under construction.

The TD bank is expected to open in March of 2010, and the Costco should be complete sometime during the spring of next year, he said.

When both stores open, the East Point Shopping development will be about halfway complete, he said.

The stores join other outlets such as Indigo Books and Music, Starbucks, a variety of clothing stores and The Home Depot, which launched the development of East Point Shopping in 2006.

"This is not a typical big box store mall," Wheatley said. "This is adding an attraction to the city. It's a little upper-scale development that makes the city a more attractive place."

He said developers have been care-

ful to maintain an architectural theme throughout the buildings. The site is carved out of a rocky hillside – mostly shale – and rock is a part of the design of each store, including the new bank.

The bank will be bordered with stone trim and a tower structure will sit on the corner of the building.

"The building they're putting up has the extra finishes and architecture that will complement the site," Wheatley said. "It's a quality company putting up a quality building."

He said getting quality businesses in the shopping centre is all part of East Point's strategy and part of Saint John's rebirth.

"It's about bringing Saint John into the 21st century," he said, adding it was part of developer Troy Northrup's original vision.

"We want to make Saint John a more attractive and modern place to either stay and shop or visit and shop."

He said the new Costco will be very visible from the province's busiest stretch of highway, enticing drivers to stop in the city.

"Retail is really growing," he said. "And the east has the largest single concentration of retail in Atlantic Canada."

Wheatley couldn't say what other retailers might be added to the East Point site, but said discussions are ongoing.

"Hopefully before too long, we'll have some more announcements to make," he said.