

# Mid-Iowa News

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## **Walgreens to build on former Okoboji Grill site**

**By: Laura Millsaps**

Long-awaited progress at North Grand Mall has arrived. The Walgreens pharmacy currently located at the south end of mall complex will relocate to a new store constructed on the site of the former Okoboji Grill.

The new, 14,820 square foot free-standing facility on the east side of the mall's parking lot will include a pharmacy drive-through on the structure's west side.

Construction on the new store is expected to start in October with an opening slated for June 2009. Walgreens will continue to operate in its current location until the new facility is completed.

The relocation of the Walgreens store to a new building, announced by North Grand Mall owners GK Development today, is the first step in the real estate company's previously announced, multi-year redevelopment of the 37-year-old shopping center and addition of the Streets of North Grand.

The company expects to spend \$30 million to add or remodel a total of 150,000 square feet of space, combining the existing mall with an open-air pedestrian shopping area. The project originally was slated to begin in 2007.

The Ames City Council recently approved extending a deadline for North Grand Mall Partners LLC to reconfigure a parking lot and install a fire-rated door under the terms of a developer's agreement from July 2007. The developer's attorney requested the extension citing the "competitive nature of the marketplace." The extension gives the owners of the mall another year, to 2009.

GK Development, based in Barrington, Ill., owns, manages and leases 5 million square feet of space in nine states.

Walgreens is the nation's largest drugstore chain with fiscal 2008 sales of \$59 billion. The company operates 6,443 drugstores in 49 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

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