

washingtonpost.com

An Opening Scene for a Developer's Dream

Monday, June 4, 2007; D02

A long-awaited effort to bring high-end retail to [Prince George's County](#) kicked off Friday with the opening of a 14-screen movie theater.

The multiplex, built by Consolidated Theatres, is the first new theater in Prince George's in 10 years -- and the first in [Hyattsville](#) in 40. It's also the first commercial space to open in the \$1.2 billion University Town Center development, about a mile from the [University of Maryland](#) and near the Hyattsville Metro station.

Twelve restaurants, including a sushi place, a white-tablecloth bistro, a burger joint and a wine bar, are set to open in the next three months.

A [Safeway](#) and Wireless Toyz, a store that sells cellphones and other electronic gadgets, are expected before Labor Day.

Retailers are a vital component of the 56-acre, 1 million-plus square-foot project that's trying to channel foot traffic into a mixed-use zone with luxury condo towers and college student housing.

Catherine Timko, spokeswoman for developer Prince George's Metro Center, said University Town Center will be the largest swath of retail in the area, "like a downtown [Bethesda](#), [Clarendon](#) or Seventh Street in D.C."

Planning for the town center project began in the 1960s. Shortly thereafter, about 5,000 office workers, employed mainly by government agencies, moved in.

Then Interstate 95 came through the area, halting development. In the 1980s, the real estate market slumped.


Prince George's Metro Center President Herschel W. Blumberg, who has owned the property since 1954, has spent the better part of the past decade getting the development off the ground.

As part of the opening celebration, people passing through the Hyattsville Metro station received free movie passes all weekend to see the latest "[Shrek](#)" and "Spiderman" flicks. They'll have to pay, however, to see the third "Pirates of the Caribbean."

Timko suspects the Royale 14 Cinemas will be the main attraction, though she's afraid people will wonder about the name.

"We tried to get Hyattsville in the name of the theater, but it wouldn't fit on the signage," she said.

Advertisement




UNIVERSITY OF
MARYLAND
ROBERT H. SMITH
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
Leaders for the Digital Economy

are you
positioned
to lead

-- **Kim Hart**

Post a Comment

Ad Join the discussion. Sponsored by Cisco.  welcome to the human network. **CISCO**

[View all comments](#) that have been posted about this article.

Your washingtonpost.com User ID will be displayed with your comment.

You must be logged in to leave a comment. [Log in](#) | [Register](#)

Submit

Comments that include profanity or personal attacks or other inappropriate comments or material will be removed from the site. Additionally, entries that are unsigned or contain "signatures" by someone other than the actual author will be removed. Finally, we will take steps to block users who violate any of our posting standards, terms of use or privacy policies or any other policies governing this site. Please review the [full rules](#) governing commentaries and discussions. You are fully responsible for the content that you post.

© 2007 The Washington Post Company

Ads by Google

[BBQ Season is Here](#)

Grills by Weber, Char-Broil, and more. Buy online, pick up in store!

www.SEARS.com