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Mounds View picks company to develop gas station site

Master Development Group and the city have an agreement on a city-owned site on County Road 10, at least for six months.

By [Eric M. Hanson](#), Star Tribune

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Mounds View and Master Development Group have a preliminary agreement on city-owned property that gives the company six months as the exclusive developer there.

The property, at County Roads 10 and H2, was once home to a Premium Stop gas station. The city bought the site in 2006 and has looked at redeveloping it as a step toward a broader revitalization of County Road 10, one of the city's main commercial roadways but one that lost significant traffic when Hwy. 10 opened to the north.

City manager Jim Ericson called the deal "a formalized handshake" that will allow Master Development of Minneapolis to pitch the property to businesses with the assurance that the city won't sell it to another firm.

"We're not obligated to sell anything to them; they're not obligated to purchase it," he said. "And if they want to terminate or we want to terminate, we can do so. ... But let's see what we can work on together."

The type of redevelopment the firm has in mind is one the city has discussed for the past year.

The site would have two buildings -- a two-story and a single-story -- that would house a mix of retail and office space.

Together, the buildings would be roughly 15,000 to 18,000 square feet.

Mike Tobin, a project manager for Master Development, said his group likes the site in part because of the addition of a new Medtronic campus on nearby Hwy. 10.

"I like the prospects. It's an intriguing location," he said. "There's a lot of activity in the area, with the Medtronic campus just to the north and the [development of the former army ammunition site in Arden Hills] coming down the pike in the next few years."

Master Development's approach, he said, is to find "underutilized" property, and that's how the company views the property in Mounds View.

"We plant our flag in the ground, and the ripple effect of development seems to happen after we take a stab at it," he said.

The developer is talking with the owners of Taiko Sushi, a restaurant near the property, about how best to accommodate the existing restaurant into its proposal, Tobin said. One possibility is that the restaurant be moved into a new building.

Master also is interested in acquiring adjacent property that was formerly home to Robert's sports bar, he said.

Were that to happen, Master would assemble both properties into a more uniform redevelopment project, possibly with a new road into the area off County Road H2.

For now, Tobin said, his company will be taking concept plans for the city-owned site to potential tenants, then will go back to the city with proposals.

Ericson said the city chose Master because of the firm's experience elsewhere.

"They've done in-fill redevelopment projects and they've worked on vacant gas station sites -- the exact same type of redevelopment," he said.

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