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APRIL 2007 \$4.50

LOUISVILLE: \$50-MILLION PLANS UNVEILED FOR DOWNTOWN RETAIL-OFFICE SPACE

LOUISVILLE developer Todd Blue has announced plans for a \$50 million retail-office complex to be built in downtown Louisville. The Iron Quarter complex will be adjacent to the city's planned \$252 million downtown arena and will feature everything from clothing, furniture and jewelry stores to restaurants, cafes and coffee shops.

Blue owns eight buildings in the East Main Street block, along with a vacant lot. Six of the buildings have historic cast-iron facades, hence the name Iron Quarter. The development's name also pays homage to the Blue family's former scrap metal business, which for decades operated nearby.

Blue plans to keep the historic cast-iron facades while building a new glass structure on the vacant lot. He will also construct a series of new glass and steel structures on top of the East Main buildings, merging historic 19th century architecture with contemporary 21st century style. The project was designed by Bravura, a Louisville architectural firm headed by Jim Walters.

City leaders were exultant over the announcement.

"The arena is already paying huge dividends, even before the first shovel of dirt is turned," Mayor Jerry Abramson said. "This proves that our decision to build the arena downtown was correct."

Construction is to begin this December with a grand opening scheduled for spring 2010.



The proposed Iron Quarter complex will contain about 120,000 square feet of retail space and 110,000 square feet of office space, and will include 500 parking spaces inside the development. Developer Todd Blue has not yet named the tenants he is seeking for Iron Quarter, but said they will be popular stores familiar to many.

Rendering by Spine 3D, courtesy of Louisville Metro Gov't