

WASHINGTON BUSINESS JOURNAL

MoCo to relocate more than 900 employees to \$152M Wheaton HQ by 2020

Dec 12, 2018, 2:50pm EST Updated: Dec 13, 2018, 11:01am EST

See Correction/Clarification at end of article

More than 900 Montgomery County staffers will be moved from older offices scattered around the county into a new \$152 million headquarters facility in Wheaton by summer 2020.

The move is part of an effort to create fresh digs for several county agencies currently located in Silver Spring, Rockville and Wheaton, and to create a central town square that will enliven the area around the Wheaton Metro station.

Montgomery County is the master developer of the new 14-story, Class A building at 2425 Reddie Drive. It is being constructed by a joint venture of Bethesda-based StonebridgeCarras LLC and Greenbelt-based Bozzuto.

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, a state-chartered agency currently headquartered at an aging facility at 8787 Georgia Ave., will own the Wheaton facility, which will go up on one of the three parcels slated for redevelopment including a county-owned parking lot.



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MNCPPC will occupy 132,215 square feet and lease the balance of the 308,000-square-foot building to the county, which will split the building's operating costs with the agency. The project will also include 11,875 square feet of first-floor retail, a day care center and community public spaces.

Paul Mortensen, senior urban designer with the county, told me the goal was to ensure the Wheaton building and its assets "were very civic and democratic in nature."

"The government buildings built between the 1960s and '80s are very insular and kind of keep people out," Mortensen said. "They are almost like fortresses."

The county departments for environmental protection, permitting services, recreation and health will all move to the building. All tenants will have access to four floors of underground parking with 400 spaces owned by the state Department of Transportation. The garage will be open to the public.

Once the building is complete, StonebridgeCarras and Bozzuto will acquire the MNCPPC's 8787 Georgia Ave. site by 2021 and begin work on a privately financed mixed-use redevelopment with 360 apartments and 26,000 square feet of retail.

As part of a deal with the developers, the MNCPPC has agreed to convey the land at 8787 Georgia Ave. by deed to the county, along with a park that will remain undeveloped. Carol Rubin, a project manager with the MNCPPC, said the deed is being held in escrow until the Wheaton headquarters building is completed. The county will convey the land to StonebridgeCarras and Bozzuto.

"The conveyance of the land was part of the payment to them," Rubin said.

StonebridgeCarras Principal Doug Firstenberg said he hopes to deliver the housing units and retail at 8787 Georgia Ave. by 2022.