Lithia Motors celebrates ground breaking of Oregon's largest-ever auto mall

by Bend Weekly News Sources

Lithia Motors, Inc., the country's fast growing, publicly held automotive dealership group, announced Monday that it will begin construction on the largest dedicated Auto Mall in the state of Oregon.

Lithia, with its 60 year commitment to the local automotive market, will be developing 60 acres to house dealerships from nine different manufacturer franchises. The first site under construction is the Lithia Chrysler Jeep Dodge store. The Auto Mall will be about a mile north of downtown Medford and is the first step in starting the City of Medford's Downtown Commons plan. Lithia will be building a new corporate headquarters downtown as part of the Commons project once the current Lithia dealerships have been relocated.

Lithia Motors, Inc. is a Fortune 1000 and Russell 2000 Company that sells 25 brands of new vehicles and operates 105 stores located in 15 states and over the Internet through "Lithia.com-America's Car & Truck Store." Lithia also sells used vehicles; arranges finance, warranty, and credit insurance contracts; and provides vehicle parts, maintenance, and repair services at all of its locations. Lithia retailed 103,333 new and used vehicles and had $2.9 billion in total revenue in 2005.A groundbreaking is scheduled for the new Auto Mall on January 24 at 2:30 PM at 4540 Gruman Drive, at the intersection of Coker Butte Rd and Highway 62. All interested media and area residents are invited to attend. Sid DeBoer, Lithia Chairman; Mark DeBoer, President of Lithia Real Estate; Bryan DeBoer, President and Chief Operating Officer; Dick Heimann, President of Corporate Affairs; Don Jones, Senior Vice President of Retail Operations; Jeff DeBoer, Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer will join Medford's Mayor Gary Wheeler and other Lithia and local representatives for the official ground breaking.

"The groundbreaking is an auspicious event for Lithia as it is both a culmination of everything we've done over the last 60 years and a catapult to the future," said Sid DeBoer, Lithia Chairman and CEO. "I am tremendously proud of our plan, we will have best in class dealership and corporate facilities right here in our hometown."

"Lithia Motors has been a cornerstone of the Rogue Valley for over 60 years and I am thrilled to witness yet another significant investment in this community and in our residents," said Mayor Gary Wheeler. "Lithia has always set the bar extremely high, but we look forward to seeing even greater achievements through these new facilities."

"The Lithia Auto Mall is being designed to create the ultimate consumer experience and convenience with nine dealerships to shop at," said Mark DeBoer, of Mark DeBoer Construction. "The store will be 60,000 square feet, and at a cost of $10 million it will have every imaginable amenity to offer world class vehicle sales and service experiences."

"Since Lithia began in 1946 with a single Chrysler dealership, it seems only fitting that our first site for development be the Lithia Chrysler Jeep Dodge store," said Sid DeBoer.

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