

Signs of Steelyard center visible from area roads

By Ken Prendergast
Staff Writer

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The largest open-air retail complex ever to be built in Cuyahoga County is starting to take shape on the site of the former LTV Steel West Side Works.

Roads, sewers, lighting and other infrastructure have made their appearance in the Cuyahoga Valley, across state Route 176 and Interstate 71 from MetroHealth Medical Center. The construction work has provided passers-by with a visible outline of what the \$120 million, 125-acre development will look like. It's a view now visible at night, as some lights have also come on at the site.

In the coming days, the shape of the first of 50 stores — a Target and Home Depot — will become apparent, too. Initial construction will include 650,000 square feet of retail space and four free-standing restaurants, nearly all of which are slated to be open in spring 2007. Nearly 600,000 square feet of space, out of a total of 900,000 square feet planned, has been leased.

"The progress of Steelyard Commons is well under way and we owe it all to our diligent, hard-working crew for staying on schedule and achieving the milestones we have set thus far," said Mitchell Schneider, president of First Interstate Properties Ltd. Lyndhurst-based First Interstate Properties is the development firm building Steelyard Commons.

"We are exactly where we wanted to be at the project's half-way point and we are especially pleased with the impact of the illumination of the site, making this an attractive neighborhood asset," he said.

After its September groundbreaking, the former steel-mill site has undergone environmental cleanup, which is nearly complete. Installation of gas, water and electrical lines preceded extensive concrete work at the site, totaling 7,000 linear feet of street curbs. Paving on Steelyard Drive and store parking lots should be done by late July, according to a release by First Interstate.