



## Sequoia Commons Building Begins

The West Side Development Will Include Condominiums And A New Library.

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Construction begins today on the sometimes controversial Sequoia Commons development at Midvale and Tokay boulevards on Madison's West Side.

The mixed-use retail, residential and library center will replace the aging and now half-vacant 40,000-square-foot Midvale Plaza, built in 1957.

The \$18 million first phase of the project will include the Madison Public Library's 20,000-square-foot Sequoia Branch, 7,000 square feet of retail space and 45 condominium units. About 100 more residential units and 10,000 square feet of more retail space are planned in the project's \$25 million second phase.

The condominium units and the library will be ready for occupancy next spring. The second phase of construction is expected to begin in the summer or fall of 2008.

A commercial building has been torn down to make way for the first phase, but developer Joe Krupp said the plaza including the existing library won't be torn down until the first phase is finished.

"Building a mixed-use development around a library is certainly a unique feature to this development," Krupp said. "This is the first redevelopment (in Madison) of a more suburban (type) infill site."

Krupp is developing the project with partners Jack Kelly and his sons, Scott and Jerry, through an entity called Midvale Plaza Joint Venture. The architect is Simonson Germany Nonemaker + Associated.

The Sequoia Branch library, the busiest in the region, will expand from its current 11,000-square-foot space. The branch had more than 400,000 visitors last year and distributed more than 900,000 books and media items.

A glass-enclosed reading area with a fireplace at the corner of Midvale and Tokay boulevards will provide a focal point and street visibility for the library branch, said Madison Public Library director Barb Dimick.

"We'll be able to build in the infrastructure for technology, which we haven't been able to do in the other buildings," she said. "We also will have more room so we can offer more Internet access for people."

Dimick said the added space will mean a new children's area, a teen space, which the current branch doesn't have, and small conference rooms in addition to a large conference room.

She said the branch will incorporate many sustainable design features, which could make it the second LEED-certified library in the region. LEED, which stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, is a designation by the U.S. Green Building Council.

The library portion of the project will be city-owned and the city is contributing \$4.2 million toward the purchase, construction and buying of new equipment and computers. The Madison Public Library Foundation hopes to raise about \$975,000 in private donations.

The project's L-shaped layout allows a central surface parking lot with 100 spaces for shoppers and library visitors. Another 80 underground parking spaces will be reserved for residents.



Condominiums will be priced from \$159,900 to \$449,900 for one- to three-bedroom units from 500 to 1,622 square feet. Units will feature nine-foot ceilings, energy efficient appliances and all but one unit will have a terrace or balcony.

The project stirred neighborhood controversy last year.

Although the proposed development won City Council approval in July, neighbors objected to the building's height, causing Krupp to scale back the height from four stories to three along Midvale Boulevard.

The revised design overcame neighborhood objections, but the project remained an issue in this spring's 11th District City Council race. Ald. Tim Gruber, a project supporter, overcame opposition by two candidates to narrowly win re-election.

