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From the Cincinnati Business Courier:

<https://www.bizjournals.com/cincinnati/news/2017/10/27/prototype-panera-bread-starbucks-kicking-off-mason.html>

Prototype Panera Bread, Starbucks kicking off Mason development

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Oct 27, 2017, 5:43am EDT

The region's first new prototype Panera Bread and a Starbucks are kickstarting the commercial portion of the mixed-use development Mason Grand.

A nearly 5,000-square-foot Panera Bread, which is the first in the region to have the new, modern design — complete with a drive-thru — is expected to open Nov. 7. Just to the east, a Starbucks is expected to be developed on a 1-acre site.

These two retailers will be the first in front of Mason Grand, a 70-acre upscale apartment development that was built and developed by Columbus-based Schottenstein Real Estate Group. The \$45 million project has 294 apartments.

About 17.5 acres of land at the front of the community along Kings Mill Road was saved for retail and office development. Seven additional sites totaling about 14.7 acres remain available.

Brian Schottenstein, president of Schottenstein Real Estate Group, said with the upcoming opening of Panera Bread, this is becoming a hot market for retail.

"This is going to be the next area to take off," Schottenstein told me.

Melanie Murray, regional marketing director for Covelli Enterprises, the largest franchisee of Panera Bread LLC, said the latest Panera Bread will have a more modern, relaxed design. This also will be the first Panera Bread in the region with five ordering kiosks for customers.

Located at 4720 Kings Mills Road, this Panera Bread is still looking to hire additional employees. Murray expects this bakery-cafe to hire between 50 and 60 total employees.

Covelli Enterprises, headquartered in Warren, Ohio, operates more than 300 Panera Bread locations, including 21 in Greater Cincinnati. The new Mason location marks the first new Panera Bread in the Cincinnati market since 2014.

Schottenstein Real Estate Group recently hired OnSite Retail Group to market the remaining sites near the new Panera Bread. Josh Rothstein, retail specialist with OnSite, said the sites are ready for a developer or purchaser to start construction. He said feedback has been positive since marketing of the Mason Grand outparcels began.

"I'm hungry, so I've been shoving these in front of banks, restaurants, medical office users, developers and the response has been great," Rothstein told me.



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Greater Cincinnati's first prototype Panera Bread is scheduled to open in front of Mason Grand on Nov. 7.

One additional outparcel is under contract with a developer.

Rothstein said a fast-casual giant like [Panera Bread coming](#) to the area will result in others locating nearby.

“Once you get strong users like Panera or [Starbucks](#), the others will follow,” Rothstein said.

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