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Home Depot to add 500 jobs

Another 10 distribution centers planned for spot off I-75

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MONROE - Construction is under way off Interstate 75 on a 657,000-square-foot regional distribution center for home improvement retailer Home Depot that is expected to employ more than 500.

The Atlanta-based chain has quietly committed to the first of what could be more than 6 million square feet of distribution-center space in Vandercar Holdings' Corridor 75 Industrial Park, southeast of I-75 and Ohio 63.

"To have a retailer like Home Depot is a fantastic way to kick off the park," said Steve Dragon of Vandercar, which is building the \$35 million Home Depot facility with industrial property developer ProLogis.

Within a few weeks, Vandercar will begin construction on a second 650,000-square-foot distribution center next to the Home Depot building. Madisonville-based Vandercar has presented plans for the 430-acre industrial park calling for up to 11 distribution center buildings that would employ several thousand people.

The second building has no tenants signed up. But Dave Noonan of real estate broker Colliers Turley Martin Tucker said: "We're seeing a lot of interest in the site."

Home Depot will use the so-called Rapid Deployment Center to supply inventory to 120 of its stores from Chicago to Memphis. The facility, slated for completion later this year, will handle up to 500 trucks daily.

"This is really a great project," said Kimm Coyner, executive director of the Warren County Port Authority, which is financing about 3,000 feet of road access from Ohio 63 into the park. Phase 1 of the five-lane road will cost about \$2.2 million, including a \$700,000 state grant, she said.

Duke Realty Corp. pitched a site for the Home Depot project on the west side of Monroe in the Monroe Commerce Center off Ohio 63.

The Vandercar site qualifies for a 15-year, 100 percent tax abatement on new investment. The Vandercar site is also adjacent to Chelsea Property Group's planned \$80 million outlet mall overlooking I-75.

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