

Zimmerman Honda breaks ground in Moline

Doug Schorpp | Posted: Tuesday, November 29, 2011 9:36 pm

The traditional gold shovels were used to ceremonially break ground Tuesday on the \$8 million Zimmerman Honda auto dealership located on the southeast corner of 70th Street and John Deere Road, Moline.

But as owner Mark Zimmerman noted, workers already were in the background doing the initial stages of real digging in preparation for the dealership's move from its longtime home in Rock Island back to Moline, where it began almost 60 years ago.

"The whole staff is just thrilled by this project," Zimmerman general manager R.C. Rogers said.

Bush Construction is the general contractor on the 40,000-square-foot building. Completion is expected to be anywhere from July to October, depending on the weather. The staff of 40 employees also is expected to grow by 10 once the dealership opens, Rogers added.

"We are excited to have them back again," Moline Mayor Don Welvaert said.

The dealership, which opened in 1952 in Moline, has been at 1740 5th Ave., Rock Island, since 1962. But it lacks sufficient space there, Zimmerman has said. He said the traffic count on John Deere Road is 13 times higher than in the Rock Island location. He said the new facility will have eight car showrooms, a second floor for offices and meeting rooms, and 27 service bays.

Moline city officials have said a rebate the dealership will receive consists of 55 percent of Moline's 1 percent municipal sales tax. It would begin next year and is projected to take about 13 years to reach \$1.9 million. However, the rebate is based on actual car sales, not projected sales. Therefore, it could take a shorter or longer period of time to reach the \$1.9 million.

Zimmerman would use the rebate to assist with costs associated with purchasing the land, development and construction.

Ray Forsythe, Moline's planning and development director, said with the rebate, city would gain an estimated \$4 million in net new revenue.

Welvaert said the area for the dealership was annexed into the city, which means sewer and water services must be extended there. That is expected to attract additional retail development to the area.