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Water park construction could begin within 90 days

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Construction of an indoor water and hotel complex in southwest Council Bluffs that would create at least 100 new local jobs should begin in about 90 days, the developer said.

"We're looking forward to it," said Chuck Mackey, president of Capital Management Inc. of Overland Park, Kan. "We're excited, and hopefully people will come and enjoy our facilities."

His firm has reached an agreement with the Southwest Iowa Foundation to purchase the ground where the complex is to be built and begin the construction process, Mackey said.

"We anticipate closing on the ground in the next 90 days, and we would then begin the construction," Mackey said.

Both the water park and the hotel would be completed in early 2006, he said.

The size of the complex should be about 40,000 square feet, with the total cost in the range of \$25 million, he said.

It's to be located south of where the Mid-America Center is located and west of the Bass Pro Shops facility that's currently under construction.

"The water park will primarily be indoors, but would have outdoor amenities and other recreational opportunities," he said. "We plan on having the latest, greatest amenities. There will be a lot of the same features people run into elsewhere."

The complex will also include a Marriott hotel with 150 to 200 rooms with some banquet and meeting rooms, he said.

At least 100 new jobs would be created from this project, he said. These would include administrative and sales positions, program directors, lifeguards for the water park, guest room attendants and more, he said.

"We would like to pursue all those jobs in the area," Mackey said.

He liked what was happening in that part of the city for choosing Council Bluffs for the project, Mackey said.

"I like the Mid-America Center and the recreational opportunities developing there, and the interstate exposure is important," he said.

Mackey praised city officials for their efforts to bring the project.

"The people in Council Bluffs were easy to work with," he said. "They were diligent in making it happen."

John Burns, Iowa West Foundation president, said, "I think it's a good enhancement to the area. I'm sure they will be a good partner to the Mid-America Center, the Bass Pro Shops and the entertainment theaters there and the casinos. It's going to be a good fit."