

# Green condos, shops ready to break ground

By [MIKE FITZPATRICK](#) | Friday May 09 2008, 1:47am

**PERKINS TWP.**



Provided illustration: An artist's conception of the Ashford Park residential/retail complex planned for Perkins Township

Luxury condos atop swanky shops are on the way.

Ashford Park, a 91.5-acre residential and commercial development behind the Sandusky Mall, will break ground at the end of the summer, the project's CEO announced Thursday at Plum Brook County Club.

The development will feature four towers of condos with first-floor retail areas.

The project will start with the construction of 85,000 square feet of retail space, said Ryan Goldberg, CEO of Centurion Development. When the project is completed it will include 804 high-end condos, ranging in price from \$200,000-\$600,000. Penthouses will go for more than \$800,000. The plan also calls for 98 townhouses and 103 patio homes.

The project will use wind turbines and solar energy for power.

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"Green living creates a community that is both financially and environmentally sustainable," Goldberg said.

The key to growing the local economy "is blowing in the wind," Goldberg said. The buildings in the project will leave a "zero carbon footprint."

By going green, residents can expect utility bills as low as \$25 a month, he said.

Goldberg hopes to attract baby boomers and empty-nesters as residents, because many are returning to the Midwest from areas such as Florida to reconnect with family.

Twenty-six \$1,500 deposits for condos already have been taken, and there are many others who have expressed an interest in jumping on board, Goldberg said.

"We will create a new reason to come to Sandusky," he said.

He did not downplay critics' concerns about undertaking such an ambitious project in Perkins Township and Sandusky, but instead took them head on.

"I take an offense to people who ask why Sandusky?" he said.

Goldberg said what attracted him to the area was the fact that it's located within a one-day drive of about 60 million people. The presence of Cedar Point, Lake Erie, the islands, water parks, and other attractions drew 10 million visitors who spent \$1.8 billion in the area in 2005, was another reason to pick the location, he said.

The retail area will feature entertainment venues, shops, and restaurants.

Goldberg envisions groups from Canada busing down to Sandusky for shopping at the stores at Ashford Park. He said a mall in Erie, Pa., draws busloads of people from up north on a regular basis and said Ashford Park could do the same. He said the high-end retail could also keep dollars locally that are spent at successful "lifestyle shopping areas" like Easton Town Center in Columbus, Levis Commons near Toledo and Crocker Park in Westlake.

The property for the project is owned by the Cafaro Co., which owns Sandusky Mall. The Cafaro Co. is also a partner in the project.

"It's the ideal project for Sandusky at this time," Anthony Cafaro Sr. said.

Condo owners will fund the project, which Goldberg said is a "cash" project. The buildings will not be built until they are paid for, Goldberg said. Goldberg said profits generated by leasing retail space will create revenue streams that will pay for structural improvements, including upgrades in green technology as it becomes available, Goldberg said.

The condos are upscale. They'll feature renewable bamboo flooring in the kitchen and living areas, open-style kitchens that overlook living areas and granite countertops. The units will all feature balconies to increase living space.

The units range from the one-bedroom, one-bath, 957-square-foot indoor living space Adare, to the two-floor Inglenook penthouse suites with three bedrooms, 3.5 baths and 3,650 square feet of interior living space.