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## 'Edgefield District' planned for pig farm

*Mike McMenamain envisions cultural center, housing development for 125 acres on either side of Halsey*

BY ERIN SERRA  
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TROUTDALE — A convention center, amphitheater and single family homes may eventually be built on the "Pig Farm," the 46 acres north of Halsey Street that Multnomah County is close to selling.

The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners recently approved the sale of the property, which was declared surplus in

November 2004.

Centex Homes, one of the nation's leading home building companies, will buy the land for \$7.4 million and develop approximately 113 lots, said Michael Sublett, senior property management specialist with Multnomah County. Centex Homes is also responsible for developing a residential area in the Wood Village Town Center.

In a separate transaction, Centex Homes will

then sell 11 acres of the property to Mike McMenamain for the expansion of Edgefield.

"The chance to do something across the street is gathering momentum," Mike McMenamain told the crowd at the West Columbia Gorge Chamber of Commerce's Emerging Industries Showcase on Friday, May 5.

McMenamain, who along with his brother, Brian McMenamain, is behind the empire, has big plans for the pig farm, as well as the former county jail, just east of Edgefield.

Although McMenamain said the concerns

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that kept him from buying the property previously — wetlands, a possible 242nd connector and a railroad right-of-way — are still there, but he is hopeful that he will be able to begin construction within two years.

"It will work," McMenamain said. "It will just take time."

He hasn't worked out the specifics, but plans call for a convention center that would hold 750-1,000 people.

"We hate turning down (large) groups," McMenamain said, noting that one of Edgefield's larger gathering spots, Blackberry Hall, holds only a couple hundred people.

An amphitheater, lodging, a swimming pool and gardens could also be in the works.

"This is very exciting," Sublett said. "It would be a significant town center component in Troutdale."

McMenamain agrees wholeheartedly.

"The area is going to inform what you are doing ... and it's going to be special," McMenamain said, noting the beauty and uniqueness of East Multnomah County.

"It's a fabulous place to be, except for the East Wind that pops up sometimes, but that's even fun," McMenamain said. "Who else has that?"

Centex plans to develop the residential portions of the property in a manner that complements the Edgefield style, and it hopes to include green spaces, Sublett said.

McMenamain said he is excited

about partnering with Centex Homes on the development of the Edgefield North property.

"Why not build some residential around your cultural center?" McMenamain asked. "They are part of your community."

The total surplus property, including the parcels south of Halsey adjacent to Edgefield, encompasses almost 125 acres.

Although there are technically three buyers for this property — Centex Homes, the McMenamain brothers and the Reynolds School District — county officials are presenting the proposed development as a single entity, the Edgefield District.

"We truly believe the whole is more than the sum of the parts," Sublett said, noting that the area would benefit from regional planning and design standards.

County officials presented the plan to the Troutdale City Council at a work session on Tuesday, May 2.

"I think it got an initial favorable response from the City Council," Sublett said.

In addition to the pig farm property McMenamain hopes to acquire, he also has designs on the former Multnomah County Correctional Facility, commonly known as "the Farm."

"It's just built-in fun," McMenamain said. "There's just enormous potential in its quirkiness."

He hopes to eventually turn the jail into 50 dormitory-style rooms, some with patios, and add gardens, a soaking pool and an area for weddings.

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