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3rd office building to join Barkley Village complex

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MOUNT BAKER: This phase of development includes day-care center, golf driving range.

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THE BELLINGHAM HERALD

Construction workers are clearing ground for a third office building at the Barkley Village development in Mount Baker neighborhood.

The 55,000-square-foot building will be three stories tall, located just south of the two office buildings Talbot Real Estate already has built at its mixed commercial, office and residential development.

The company also is building a 5,000-square-foot day-care facility and has submitted plans for a 26-stall golf driving range at the development, located near Barkley Boulevard and Woburn Street.

Rob Ney, vice president of development and construction for Talbot, said things are moving quickly at the development, where the second office tower opened in May.

"When you open the doors and it's already 100 percent leased, that certainly helps," he said. "We're quite happy with the way things are going, and we want to keep that momentum."

The second office tower is home to Olympic Health Management, a company that develops and administers Medicare health plans. The company moved from a downtown building, purchased by Whatcom County, and now occupies three of the four floors of the second office building.

"We miss Hizzoner's Deli, but other than that this has been a very positive move for us," said Debbie Ahl, chief operating officer of Olympic Health. "We were able to consolidate two offices into one, which has improved communication and created more efficient meeting space. And it's a pleasant environment for us the building suites us extremely well."

That kind of testimonial is helping Talbot, which is seeing buildings go up at Barkley Village at a quick pace. In the past two years, Horizon Bank and InterWest Bank have opened branches, and a new building with medical offices opened earlier this year. Grocery giant Haggen Inc. houses its corporate headquarters in the first office building.

Ney said the building in which Whatcom Family YMCA is expected to operate a day-care facility could be completed by November, and the third office building should open by next June.

Moss Adams, an accounting firm, has already agreed to lease 18,000 square feet in the third office tower.

Though the golf driving range "won't be a huge money-maker for us," Ney said the company hopes it will help draw more people to the area, which is being designed as a rival to downtown and Fairhaven.

Next year, Talbot hopes to begin work on a second wing of the medical building, if it can lure doctors.

The bigger plan, to expand the Barkley Village shopping center across Barkley Boulevard toward the office-building complex, will likely be a few more years in the making, Ney said.

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"When the market demands that space, we will build it," he said. "I think that's still a few years out."

RACHEL E. BAYNE HERALD PHOTO

GETTING STARTED: Construction has begun on a three-story office building in Barkley Village in Bellingham. Employees of the BBG Group put in a storage drain Thursday near the building site.

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