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Cerner breaks ground on planned Kansas City site

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KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Construction has officially begun on Cerner Corp.'s planned \$4.45 billion campus in south Kansas City.

The health information technology company is redeveloping the site of a now-demolished shopping center, called Bannister Mall, and the former Benjamin Plaza. The campus will have enough room to house 16,000 employees, The Kansas City Star reported (<http://bit.ly/1Eyts1q>).

Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon and Kansas City Mayor Sly James praised the project for its long-term economic impact at the company's groundbreaking ceremony on Wednesday. Nixon called the Cerner project the "largest economic development project in Missouri history" based on how many jobs it would create.

The project calls for 4.7 million square feet of construction in 16 buildings on 290 acres. The 10-year plan by Cerner includes about \$1.75 billion in public tax subsidies.

Cerner's president Zane Burke said the company's development is projected to spur about 370,000-square-foot of nearby retail and restaurant development. About 4,500 construction jobs are expected to be associated with the project.

Cerner is celebrating its 35th year in business. It had 2013 revenues of \$2.9 billion and net earnings of \$398.4 million.

Paul Gorup, who now serves as the company's chief of innovation, said the company's founders couldn't have dreamed of the scale Cerner has now reached.

The Cerner project is one of two large redevelopment projects in south Kansas City. The other, Oxford on the Blue, is a 344-acre biotech office park between Interstate 435 and U.S. Route 71.

Information from: The Kansas City Star, <http://www.kcstar.com>

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