

## First Look at New Westroads Food Hall

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**Flagship Commons** is set to open its doors at Westroads Mall this December. The \$5 to \$6 million project will host eight concept restaurants and will be approximately 21,000 square feet.

Anthony Hitchcock hopes it will soon become one of Omaha's most popular dining options. As one of brains behind the project, Hitchock led WOWT 6 News cameras through the new area. Once it's finished, it will be home to eight local, nearly one-of-a-kind restaurants, with menus featuring everything from unique, street-style tacos to signature burgers and custom-made salads. Plans also call for a full-service bar and eventually live music.

Even the ordering process will be different. When you place your order, you'll also give your phone number and when your order is ready for pick up, you'll get a text message.

The developers want to break-free from the idea of a standard mall food court and instead, create an upscale retail dining environment, already popular in larger cities across the country.

"It's an entertainment facility. I tell people it's kind of like the Disneyland of food for Omaha," said Hitchock.

Kasi Haberman manages the marketing for Westroads which, just last year, finished a 170,000 square-foot renovation. The renovation replaced everything from the floor tiles to the light bulbs in an effort to refresh its identity and prevent it from turning into an irrelevant retail eye sore. Haberman believes having top-notch dining inside Westroads will bring more people to the mall.

"It's really experienced-focused these days, and that's just a huge deal in the industry," said Haberman. "This is just kind of going to be a home run for us."

You'll find similar projects in malls and even airports in places like Denver, Dallas, Los Angeles.

Its focus is on local food. You'll find several national chains throughout the rest of the mall. The tentative opening date for the project is December 21.





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