

Tannery on Track



RECORD STAFF

Parts of the former Lang Tanning Co. building in downtown Kitchener are being demolished as renovations continue in preparation for a mix of new — and old — tenants by the middle of next year.

Former tannery on track to reveal facelift in '09

By Matt Walcott, Record staff

KITCHENER — The redevelopers of the former Lang tannery have cleared out most of the 350,000-square-foot building for retail and office space that should be ready for use next year.

The eclectic community of small businesses that has occupied the old buildings for nearly 30 years has been consolidated into the part of the complex fronting Francis Street, said Lana Sherman, managing director of developer Cadan Inc.

Of the nearly 100 existing businesses — martial arts studios, artists' workshops, wood shops and the like — 60 to 70 have made arrangements to stay on the property, Sherman said. The rest are closing or moving off-site.

Cadan is on schedule to have the complex, which dates to the 1890s, converted into a trendy mix of stores, restaurants and office space by the middle of next year.

The developers recently began demolishing the former Downtown Self Storage building at Victoria and Charles streets to open up space for a nearly 100-vehicle parking lot.

Cadan also plans to get rid of the mostly

empty buildings between Joseph and Oak streets for another parking lot.

Below the painted "Lang Tanning Company" advertisement facing Charles Street will be 20,000 square feet of retail space. Several restaurants should also open on the site, Sherman said. Office space and what Sherman calls the artisans' building on Francis Street will make up the balance of the development.

The demolition of the self-storage building should be completed by the end of the year. Construction of a new lobby for the artisans' building is also expected to be finished over the winter.

In the spring, the developers expect to landscape the property and run new utilities into the buildings.

The Lang tannery closed in 1954 after more than a century of producing leather in Kitchener.

Uniroyal Ltd. used the buildings for tire storage before selling them to construction company Ball Brothers Ltd. in 1973.

Cadan bought the complex for \$9.4 million in January.

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